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## A Guide through James Joyce's *Ulysses*

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WITH the exception of his *Finnegans Wake* there is probably no other novel in the English language that demands more of the reader in the way of background and application than James Joyce's *Ulysses*. To read it with ease, one should have a Ph.D. in comparative languages and literature; to read it with difficulty, one should know the *Odyssey*, *The Golden Bough*, Joyce's life and other works, E. K. Chambers' *William Shakespeare*, and much about the history of English literature, the Celtic Renaissance, Irish politics, and Roman Catholic liturgy.

The greatest difficulty in *Ulysses* lies not so much in its profundity as in its intricacy. There is scarcely an incident, however inconsequential, that is not mentioned overtly or symbolically several times; one must read with a good deal of attention to recognize a fragmentary allusion to something that has already occurred. Then, too, allusions to events historical, theological, or literary outside the book abound.

Joyce's use of language does not make the reading of *Ulysses* easier. As one critic put it, Joyce was not merely a master of English, but a tyrant over it. Besides demonstrating a vocabulary of nearly 25,000 words, Joyce transcends the bounds of Webster's *International*. New literary and rhetorical techniques are introduced, and although the "stream of consciousness" device is not original with Joyce, he makes greater use of it than any predecessor or successor.

The framework of Joyce's *Ulysses* is

Homer's *Odyssey*. Joyce's story of the 17-hour wanderings of Leopold Bloom around the city of Dublin closely parallels (although not chronologically) Homer's story of the 10-year wanderings of Odysseus around the Mediterranean following the conquest of Troy. The leading characters are also equivalent. The themes—the motifs of banishment (Odysseus, the Celts, the Jews), paternity (the search for a father of Telemachus, Stephen, Hamlet, Hamnet and William Shakespeare), and remorse of conscience (*Agenbite of Inwit*)—are the same. And there are wheels within wheels: each episode has its dominant technique and symbol, and most have a dominant art, anatomical organ, and liturgical color.

The prevailing mood of *Ulysses* is Joyce's ambivalent attitude toward Ireland, a bittersweet love-hatred that neither he nor Stephen Dedalus can explain.

In the following *Guide* page numbers refer to the Modern Library edition (1934).

EPISODE 1: TELEMACHUS; pp. 1-24. (Scene: Martello Tower; Time: 8 a.m., 16 June 1904; Art: theology; Color: white, gold; Symbol: heir; Technique: narrative, young). *Odyssey*: Odysseus (hereafter Ulysses) because of offense against the sea-god Poseidon is condemned to wander after the fall of Troy. However, the gods relent, and Zeus sends Athene to advise Ulysses' son, Telemachus, to clear the palace of suitors harassing Ulysses' wife, Penelope, and to

seek his father. *Ulysses*: STEPHEN DEDALUS (Telemachus; Joyce), "Kinch," is living in a military watchtower overlooking the beach at Sandymount. His companions are BUCK MULLIGAN (Antinous; Oliver St. John Gogarty), a witty and cynical medical student, and HAINES (for the moment, Elpenor), an Englishman. Stephen nurses a dislike for Buck for having mocked the memory of Stephen's mother, but cannot free himself since he is in debt to Buck. Stephen has left his father's house and the Catholic Church in a pathetic effort to break away from the forces that have debilitated Ireland. He torments himself with the feeling that he caused his mother's death by refusing her last request to kneel at her bed and pray; her memory haunts him throughout the book. Buck shaves; they have breakfast. An old woman (for the moment, Athene; she is to reappear as a symbol of Ireland) brings in milk. Stephen mentions his theory about Shakespeare (propounded in Episode 9); Buck sings the blasphemous "Ballad of Joking Jesus." They go swimming. As in every Irish conversation in or out of Joyce, the talk gravitates to the relations of England and Ireland. The key word here is the last—"Usurper"—Haines, Boylan, all Englishmen, Penelope's suitors.

EPISODE 2: NESTOR; 25-37 (The school; 10 a.m.; history; brown; horse; catechism, personal). *Odyssey*: Telemachus visits Ulysses' old comrade, King Nestor, and asks where his father might be found. Nestor directs him to Menelaus. *Ulysses*: Stephen goes to the school of MR. GARRETT DEASY (Nestor), where he teaches a class of small boys, and sees in the dull Cyril Sargent something of his own precarious position in the world. He lets the class drift into a riddle about a fox who killed his grandmother (the recurrent theme of matricide). After class he is paid by Deasy, an anti-Semitic Orangeman. Deasy has written an article on the foot-and-

mouth disease presently afflicting Irish cattle (possibly a symbol of Irish impotence) and persuades Stephen to use his influence to get it published in the paper, though Stephen fears Buck will ridicule him as the "bullock-befriending bard." Deasy's comfortably superficial attitude toward life increases Stephen's bitterness, and listening to the noise of the boys playing football outside, he calls God "a shout in the street."

EPISODE 3: PROTEUS; 38-51 (The Strand; 11 a.m.; philology; green; tide; monologue, male). This episode is made difficult by Joyce's use of fragments from French, Romany, German, Latin, Spanish, Italian, Greek, and Scandinavian. *Odyssey*: Menelaus tells of capturing Proteus, the sea-god. *Ulysses*: Stephen soliloquizes as he walks along Sandymount beach: Recalling Swift, he paraphrases, "Cousin Stephen, you will never be a saint." Passing by a pigeonhouse, he remembers his life in Paris. A mongrel disturbs him (Stephen, like Joyce, feared and hated dogs). Recalling a dream about Haroun al Raschid, he lets his thoughts run in gypsy cant. He thinks of mankind being related through an eternal cable of twined navelcords. The sea keeps intruding; Buck once rescued a drowning man, but Stephen could not save his mother with a prayer. His impotence in this respect is symbolized by a reference to his bad teeth. He sees a ship coming in (The *Rosevean*, carrying the garrulous sailor of Episode 16).

EPISODE 4: CALYPSO; 55-85 (Bloom's house; 8 a.m.; Organ; kidney; economics; orange; nymph; narrative, mature). *Odyssey*: Ulysses is held captive by Calypso, the nymph daughter of Atlas, in Ogygia (Gibraltar). Hermes, messenger of the gods, is sent by Zeus to order his release. *Ulysses*: LEOPOLD BLOOM (Ulysses) is in his home making breakfast for his plump, lazy, but sexually attractive wife, MOLLY or MARION (Penelope later; now, Calypso). He feeds the cat (a symbol: Bloom has no dog,

no son; only a cat, a daughter). Molly is Calypso: she holds Bloom enchanted, though their relationship is no longer that of husband and wife; she was born in Gibraltar; she is the daughter of a "giant," Major Brian Cooper Tweedy (Atlas). Bloom takes down his hat, which has a card in the brim identifying him as "Henry Flower," and goes out. He passes the pub of Larry O'Rourke, whom he thinks briefly of canvassing for an ad (Bloom's present job is advertisement-soliciting), bids Larry good morning and mentions Paddy Dignam's funeral, to be held at 11:00. In the window of Dlugacz's pork-butcher he sees but one pork kidney left (infidelity) and is concerned lest the customer preceding him will buy it. She doesn't, and he methodically admires her as she leaves. He buys the kidney and picks up a prospectus advertising investment in the Zionist Agendath Netaim, a company of orange and melon groves in Jaffa. Returning home, he puts on the kidney and looks over the mail. There is a letter from his 15-year-old daughter Millicent, who works for a photographer in Mullingar. Molly has a letter from her concert manager (she is a popular singer) and lover, BLAZES BOYLAN (Eurymachus) with whom she has an appointment (assignment) at 4:00 to rehearse "Love's Old Sweet Song." Boylan competes with Bloom also as an ad salesman. Molly is reading mild pornography; she asks Bloom what the word *metempsychosis* (to recur dozens of times during the day) means; he answers, "the transmigration of souls." "O rocks!" she replies. Bloom reads Milly's letter, thinks of Boylan's song about "those lovely seaside girls" (to recur all day), eats the burnt kidney, and takes a copy of *Tidbits* to the out-house (Joyce, like Swift, was a coprophiliac). The bells of St. George's remind him he has to attend Paddy Dignam's funeral.

EPISODE 5: THE LOTOS EATERS; 70-85 (the bath; 10 a.m.; genitals; botany, chemistry; eucharist;

narcissism). Note the sensual hints through this episode: the exotic tea, the baths, the perfume, other odors; the happy gelded cabhorses, the doped communicants, references to sleep and narcotics; Bloom himself. *Odyssey*: Ulysses and his companions are blown to the land of the Lotos Eaters. Ulysses sends his men on an ethnic expedition; they eat the lotos fruit and become lethargic, like the natives—unwilling to return home or bestir themselves with any normal human activity. Ulysses has to use force to make them leave this pleasant land. *Ulysses*: Bloom sets out on his day's peregrinations. He stops at the Westland Row Post Office and picks up under his amonym, Henry Flower, a letter from MARTHA CLIFFORD, a typist he is half-heartedly trying to seduce. He is interrupted by a casual acquaintance, M'Coy, and is forced into a conversation that irritatingly turns on Molly and Boylan. After breaking away from M'Coy he reads Martha's letter. He hears someone singing a song that is to provide another recurrent motif, "Mairy lost the pin of her drawers." He judiciously tears the letter up, enters All Hallows church at communion time (he is to meet Martha here, but she doesn't come) and reflects on the comfortable delusion of religion. Remembering that Molly asked him to have face lotion made up, he goes to the druggist's. He buys a cake of lemon soap (which now begins its own little *Odyssey*). Outside, Bantam Lyons asks him for news about the big horse race to be run today, the Ascot Gold Cup. He gives Bantam his newspaper, saying "I was just going to *throw it away* (see Episode 12). The odor of the soap suggests a bath, and he goes to a public bathhouse, where he contemplates his navel (the omphalos theme, recurrent).

EPISODE 6: HADES; 86-114 (Glasnevin cemetery; 11 a.m.; heart; religion; white, black; caretaker; incubism). *Odyssey*: Ulysses cannot leave the land of Circe without aid from the dead Teiresias, the blind Theban prophet. Ulysses

accordingly visits Teiresias and others of the dead in Hades. Teiresias warns Ulysses to beware danger in the realm of Hyperion. *Ulysses*: Bloom goes to the funeral of Paddy Dignam (Elpenor), who died of an alcoholic stroke. In the coach with Bloom are Mr. Powers; SIMON DEDALUS, Stephen's father; and Martin Cunningham (Sisyphus). They pass Stephen, walking, and Simon remarks that his son has fallen among bad companions. They talk of various things, including Ben Dollard's rendition of the patriotic ballad, "The Croppy Boy" (to recur as a symbol of Bloom's impotence); they pass Boylan, and Bloom tries to hide. Bloom is further embarrassed when Mr. Powers talks of suicides and their sure damnation (Bloom's father committed suicide). They are halted briefly by a drove of cattle (the driver is Orion). There follow some ghastly reflections on corpses. The carriage arrives at Glasnevin; they are met by Father Coffey (Cerberus), John Henry Menton (Ajax), and the caretaker, John O'Connell (Hades). A mysterious stranger in a macintosh (Theoclymenos), inorganic to the book, appears, as he is to do several times later. Paddy's coffin-band reminds Bloom of a navelcord. Paddy is buried. The talk runs again to politics and the betrayed Irish hero, Parnell (Agamemnon).

EPISODE 7: AEOLUS (The Cave of the Winds); 115-148 (the newspaper office; noon; lungs; rhetoric; red; editor; enthymemic). The conversation in this episode (which demonstrates all known rhetorical devices) is newspaper jargon. Sub-divisions are headed by newspaper captions, which evolve from 19th-century staidness to 20th-century tabloid blatancy. *Odyssey*: Ulysses lands at Aeolia. Aeolus gives him a bag containing all the ill winds that might prevent him from returning to Ithaca. The crew, however, emulate Pandora and release the winds that are to blow Ulysses farther from home into new adventures. *Ulysses*: Bloom goes to the *Freeman's Journal* and *National Press*

office to dicker for publication of an ad for a client, Alexander Keyes. He sees there one Hynes, who owes him money; hinting for repayment, he tells Hynes that there is money waiting for him. Simon Dedalus is there also, but leaves before his son arrives. Stephen comes in to deliver Deasy's article, but he and Bloom (the father for whom he is symbolically searching) do not meet. Skin-the-Goat Fitzharris, the principal person in Episode 16, is anticipated. Bloom fails to get Keyes's terms accepted by the editor.

EPISODE 8: LESTRYGONIANS; 148-181 (restaurants, environs; 1:00 p.m.; esophagus; architecture; constables; peristaltic). *Odyssey*: The released winds blow Ulysses and his companions to the land of the Lestrygonians, cannibalistic half-men, half-giants, who seize members of the crew and eat them. *Ulysses*: On his way to the National Library, Bloom is given a religious tract (a "throwaway") by a sombre YMCA young man advertising the coming of the American "Elijah"—Dr. John Alexander Christ Dowie (this is to become a strong symbol). He crumples the tract and throws it into the river Liffey (this tract is also to have a microcosmic Odyssey). The gulls (Lestrygonians) follow it down, thinking it something to eat. Bloom walks along thinking in a stream of consciousness. He reflects that life is a stream (the theme of *Finnegans Wake*). He thinks of certain things that are to recur during the day: parallax (which he doesn't completely understand), H.E.L.Y.S. (a band of 5 sandwich men), metempsychosis, 32-feet-per-second, Boylan, etc. He meets an old flame, Mrs. Breen, whose queer husband has received an anonymous postcard with the letters "U P up" referring cabalistically to his deficiencies. Bloom wonders who could have been mean enough to send it (a recurrent theme). Breen is borrowing law books to bring suit against the sender. Mrs. Breen mentions poor Mina Purefoy, three days now in labor. Bloom passes the Dublin character, Lamppost Farrell, who



always walks outside lampposts (peristalsis). His stream of consciousness flows around thoughts of food, politics, life. He sees the poet AE; enters a restaurant, but is disgusted by the table manners displayed (cannibalism); thinks of stomach-turning scenes in a slaughterhouse. He enters Davy Byrne's pub and eats a sandwich. Davy and Nosey Flynn are talking about the horserace and food. Bloom leaves; he helps a blind man (who is to reappear) across the street. He sees Blazes Boylan and tries desperately to avoid him.

EPISODE 9: SCYLLA AND CHARYBDIS: 182-215 (the library; 2:00 p.m.; brain; literature; Stratford, London; dialectic). *Odyssey*: Leaving the Sirens, Ulysses avoids the Wandering Rocks and chooses the alternative passage through a strait guarded on one side by the six-headed monster, Scylla, and on the other by the maelstrom Charybdis. Six men are eaten by Scylla, but the ship gets through. *Ulysses*: This episode is one of the hardest for the reader because of its theme and the numerous allusions, some reverting to Joyce's *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*. It deals almost entirely with Shakespeare, particularly the enigma of Hamlet. Tradition has it that the part of the ghost in *Hamlet* was played by Shakespeare; that Shakespeare was forced into marriage by an older woman; that he abandoned his wife and went to London; that he showed his hatred for her by willing her his second-best bed. These bases lead to Stephen's propounding a theory to his literary friends, Mr. Best, Mr. Eglinton, AE, and the librarian: Two main themes are recurrent in Shakespeare's plays—banishment and the adulterous brother; Shakespeare's brothers were adulterous with Anne; in *Hamlet*, Shakespeare is not Prince Hamlet, as many commentators have maintained, but the dead king; Prince Hamlet was the son who died young, Hamnet Shakespeare (cf. Bloom's dead young son, Rudy); by extension, Shakespeare is both father and son (the consubstantiation motif, to

be stated explicitly in the mirror scene in Circe). Stephen's analysis is a probing of himself—though he does not realize it fully—as well as of Shakespeare.

While these characters pass through the strait—Scylla, the stability and authoritarianism of literary and religious dogma (Stratford), and Charybdis, mysticism, Platonism (London)—Bloom arrives to look up a drawing to be copied for Keyes's advertisement, and leaves almost unnoticed. He still does not meet Stephen.

EPISODE 10: THE WANDERING ROCKS; 216-251 (the streets; 3:00 p.m.; blood; mechanics; citizens; labyrinth). *Odyssey*: Circe tells Ulysses that there are but two ways to get back to Ithaca after passing the Sirens: (1) by Scylla and Charybdis, (2) by the Wandering Rocks. Ulysses chooses the first, for only one ship, Jason's *Argo*, has ever been able to get through the Rocks—and even the *Argo*, though it had the help of the gods, lost its rudder. *Ulysses*: The Wandering Rocks are the peregrinating Dubliners. The episode is divided into 18 interlocked sections (a microcosm of the book) linked by the repetition of a phrase or scene. The purpose of the technique, labyrinth, is to show confusion and illusion (both the characters and the reader are led astray: e.g., Bloom the dentist is not Bloom the protagonist; Miss Dunne is not Martha Clifford; "Father" Cowley is not a priest). (1) Father Conmee, rector of Clongowes academy, walks to Arctane. He passes a one-legged sailor, Mrs. David Sheehy, M.P., 3 schoolboys, Mrs. M'Guinness, and CORNY KELLEHER, the undertaker, who is chewing a blade of hay (the link). He boards a tram, sees a billboard advertising a blackface minstrel, Eugene Stratton, thinks of the adultress, Mary Rochfort. (2) Corny Kelleher stands outside his shop, chewing a blade of hay, spits a jet of hayjuice, whose arc is paralleled in another part of the city by a white arm throwing a coin to the one-legged sailor. (3) The one-legged sailor begs on the argument that England

owes him something. Molly Bloom throws him a coin. (4) Katey and Boody Dedalus are in their kitchen; Maggy is boiling shirts over a fire made from Stephen's books. Meanwhile Bloom's throwaway drifts down the Liffey (the rudderless *Argo*). (5) Blazes Boylan buys fruit for Molly. (6) Stephen meets his former Italian teacher at college, Almidano Artifoni, greets him in Italian. (7) Miss Dunne, Boylan's secretary, types the date—June 16, 1904. (8) Ned Lambert shows a clergyman, Hugh C. Lowe, around St. Mary's Abbey, and meets a friend, J. J. O'Molloy. (9) Tom Rochfort demonstrates an invention to M'Coy. They see young Pat Dignam coming out of the butcher shop, and Bloom at the bookstand. Lenehan remembers being titillated by Molly one night on a tram. (10) Bloom selects the pornographic *Sweets of Sin* (mentioned frequently hereafter) for Molly. (11) Dilly Dedalus tries to get money from her father, Simon, at the auction of the Dedalus' furniture. (12) Mr. Kernan preens himself on landing an order, meets "Father" Cowley, and just misses seeing the viceroy, governor of Ireland. (13) Stephen looks in the window of jeweler Micky Anderson; he stops by a bookcart, meets Dilly, who has bought a French primer. She tells him they had to sell his books. He recognizes her intellectual potentialities for the first time. (14) Simon Dedalus meets Father Cowley, who is hounded by creditors. They talk, and see Ben Dollard shabbily dressed. (15) Martin Cunningham, John Wyse Nolan, and Mr. Power are snubbed by the politician, Long John Fanning, who announces the arrival of the viceroy. (16) Buck Mulligan and Haines watch Parnell's brother playing chess. (17) Lamp-post Farrell meanders past Artifoni, bumps into a blind man, whom he accuses of being a fake. (18) Young Pat Dignam buys porksteaks, thinks about seeing a prizefight (which actually has taken place), thinks about his dead father. (Epilogue) The viceroy and his party

pass all the people in the episode.

EPISODE 11: THE SIRENS; 252-286 (the Ormond restaurant; 4:00 p.m.; ear; music; barmaids; fugue). *Odyssey*: Ulysses sails past the island of the two Sirens, whose song lures men to their death on the rocks. Ulysses overcomes this danger by sealing the ears of his men with wax and by tying himself to the mast. *Ulysses*: (This episode is constructed like a fugue, the first two pages representing an overture composed of fragments of what is to follow. Its purpose is to show the Irish preoccupation with music.) The Misses Kennedy and Douce (Sirens), barmaids at the Ormond restaurant, watch the viceroy pass. Miss Douce flatters herself by thinking she has attracted one of the men in the entourage. Bloom passes; they make fun of "grease-bloom." Simon comes in, flirts with the barmaid Douce. They talk about the blind young man who has just tuned the Ormond piano. Lenehan enters and tries unsuccessfully to flirt with the girls. Meanwhile Bloom buys notepaper for Molly. Boylan enters, and in anticipation of his assignation with Molly, is granted a *sonnez la cloche* (garter snap) by Miss Douce. He leaves and Bloom enters. Simon, "Father" Cowley, and Ben Dollard gather around the piano to talk of Molly Bloom and sing, while Bloom eats dinner with Stephen's uncle, Richie Coughlin. The music makes him long for Martha; he tries not to think of Molly and Boylan. He begins a letter to Martha, trying not to let Richie see what he's doing. Dollard sings his sentimental ballad about the croppy boy; Bloom sees himself as the croppy boy, and reviews his sins. The punctuating *tap* of the blind man's cane signals the return of the piano tuner, who had forgotten his tuning fork. Bloom leaves the Ormond, crepitating (cf. Swift) and meditating on the heroic last words of the Irish leader Robert Emmet.

EPISODE 12: THE CYCLOPS; 287-339 (the tavern; 5:00 p.m.; muscle; politics; Fenian; gigantism). Parallels:

Note the references to blindness, eyes, drunkenness, giants, and gigantism; also the reluctance to name names. *Odyssey*: Ulysses enters the lair of the Cyclopes, and with 12 of his men is caught by Polyphemus, who eats them one by one, saving Ulysses till last. Ulysses escapes by getting the Cyclops drunk, putting out his eye with a sharpened stick, and giving the name "Noman," so that when the Cyclopes ask Polyphemus who hurt him, he answers, "no man." The Cyclops throws the top of a mountain at Ulysses' ship, but he escapes. *Ulysses*: The narrator is "I," an anonymous bill dunner (his narrative is interrupted at intervals by a running satirical commentary on Irish giants). He meets Joe Hynes, who now has the money the "prudent member," Bloom, told him about, and they go to the famous pub of Barney Kiernan's, in the court district. There they meet "The Citizen," (Cyclops), a ferocious Fenian and his vicious dog, Garryowen (which really belongs to Gerty MacDowell's grandfather). The Citizen rails against the pro-British tendencies of the national newspaper, *The Irish Independent*. Breen, the angry man with the postcard, comes in with his mousy wife, threatening a lawsuit. Alf shows some gruesome hangman's letters. Bloom enters on a mission of charity; he is looking for the lawyer Martin Cunningham to arrange for Paddy's widow to get the insurance; he accepts a cigar from Hynes (cf. Ulysses' burnt stick). As the drunken Citizen, a well-known shot-putter (cf. the Cyclops) becomes more violently patriotic, Bloom tries to keep the talk on a sensible level. He is made to admit that Molly is going on tour with Boylan. They talk about Breen, Jews, and adultery; as Bloom tries to ignore them, John Wyse Nolan and Lenehan come in, angry; they have lost on the race—a long-shot, *Throwaway*, has come first at 20-1. The Citizen's demagoguery turns to anti-Semitism; he baits Bloom. Bloom goes out for a moment around to the courthouse. Lenehan says he hasn't gone to the

courtrooms at all, but to collect a bet on *Throwaway*, for he had tipped Bantam Lyons on that horse earlier (see p. 84). Bloom returns; they hint that he ought to stand a round of drinks because of his good fortune; he doesn't understand what they are driving at. The Citizen leads an attack on the departing Bloom, throwing a biscuit tin at him. Bloom escapes in a jaunting cart, snapped at by Garryowen.

EPISODE 13: NAUSICAA; 340-376 (Sandymount beach; 8:00 p.m., eye; painting; gray, blue; virgin; tumescence, detumescence). *Odyssey*: After being released by Calypso, Ulysses is driven by a wind sent by Poseidon to the coast of the Phaeacians, where he is found by Nausicaa, daughter of King Alcinous. She is playing ball; the ball rolls against the sleeping Ulysses and wakes him. Nausicaa is at first frightened by the stranger, but perceiving that he is noble, takes him to her father. *Ulysses*: (Joyce said that this was written in a "namby-pamby-jammy marmalady" style of the cheap romantic fiction of 1904.) Bloom goes at sunset to the Sandymount beach, where Stephen earlier in the day had mused. Sitting on the beach is the sentimental 18-year-old virgin Gerty MacDowell, with her companions, Cissy Caffrey and Edy Boardman, who are watching their charges, the bratish twins, Tommy and Jacky Caffrey, and the baby Edy Boardman. The twins build a sand tower, an omphalos, like the Martello tower. Gerty has a hopeless crush on a bicyclist, Reggy Wylie, who proposes to go to Trinity College to study medicine. She leans to blue in clothes (the Virgin Mary), and like Nausicaa, she is a clean girl, with a fetish for freshly-washed clothes. We look into her stream of consciousness. Bloom, sitting some little distance off, is aroused by a ball kicked by Jacky. He sees Gerty, and she him; they conceive a quick, sentimental infatuation for each other. Gerty becomes annoyed at the children, who destroy her romantic mood. Cissy goes over and asks Bloom what time it is; she and Edy Boardman

leave shortly afterwards. Gerty puts Bloom in the place formerly held by Reggy. They watch the fireworks display (orgasm). Bloom thinks of approaching Gerty, but his thoughts always run back to Molly and Boylan. He masturbates. He sees that Gerty is lame. The cuckoo clock in Father Conroy's house alludes to Bloom's marital position.

EPISODE 14: THE OXEN OF THE SUN; 377-421 (the maternity hospital; 10:00 p.m.; womb; medicine; white; mother; embryonic development). This episode is difficult because of the writing style. Briefly, it is a running parody in which the development of Mrs. Purefoy's fetus is paralleled by the development of the English language. Each part of the episode can also be related to the stage of embryonic development: e.g., on p. 387 Oxford is referred to as "ox-tail," an echo of the vestigial tail preserved in this stage of the human embryo. *Odyssey*: Starving, Ulysses and his companions land on the island of the sun god, Hyperion, and in spite of a warning from Ulysses, the men kill and eat some of Hyperion's sacred oxen (fertility symbols). Hyperion causes all except Ulysses to be drowned during a storm. Ulysses is washed ashore on Calypso's island. *Ulysses*: The episode begins with a Celtic invocation to Holles St. Hospital and the midwife's cry "Hoopsa, boyaboy," followed by a close imitation of a medieval Latin tract on child welfare. The narrative that follows is related in Anglo-Saxon (translated) (378), Middle English (379), the style of Mandeville (380), Sir Thomas Malory (381), Sir Thomas More (385), *Euphues* (386), Spenser (386), the King James Bible (387), Browne (in Roman Catholic liturgy for Holy Week) (387), Bunyan (388), Pepys (390), Swift (393), Sterne (396), Addison (397), Goldsmith (399), Burke (400), Gibbon (403), 19th-century medical jargon (403), the Gothic novel (405), Charles Lamb (406), De Quincey (407), Coleridge (407), Lan-

dor (407), Macaulay (410), scientific jargon (411), Dickens (413), Newman (414), Pater (414), Ruskin (415), Carlyle (415), slang of various parts of the empire (417), and finally, American evangelistic oratory (420). The narrative: Bloom (male element) visits the hospital to see how Mina Purefoy is making out, and is greeted by the nurse (female element). Stephen, drunk, comes in with his medical student friends; they continue drinking, and talk about parturition. Bloom finally meets Stephen (culmination of the paternity theme), and looks upon him longingly as a son. Stephen disapproves of contraception. The talk becomes so ebullient that the nurse tells them to quiet down. The students twit Stephen, ask him why he is not a priest, since he is an eternal son and an eternal virgin; this leads naturally into a lament for Ireland. Heavy thunder makes them afraid; Bloom passes it off as a "phenomenon," but Stephen (Joyce had a neurotic fear of thunder) sees "phenomenon" as God, and is not reassured. A diatribe against vice follows. Lenehan tells Stephen that Deasy's article has appeared in the evening paper; Bloom fears that all Irish cattle will be slaughtered (Oxen of the Sun). The talk runs from bulls, bovine, to bulls, papal, thence to Irish-English-Catholic-Protestant relations. Alec Bannion comes in; Buck Mulligan announces that he is setting up a personal stud service, and is ridiculed for carrying coals to Newcastle. Nurse Callan announces the birth of a boy to Mina. Costello is disrespectful to the nurse, and is chided by Dixon; Bloom too rebukes him, and is in turn attacked for interfering. With the hospital staff referred to as government officials, the conversation turns on births of various sorts. Haines appears with a volume of Celtic literature in one hand and a vial of poison in the other; Bloom goes into a kind of opium dream in which he imagines himself a boy again. Mina is shown her child; the men continue drinking. Stephen invites them all to Burke's pub, and they



leave, singing the praise of the father, Theodore Purefoy. Bloom is the only one sober, and decides to watch out for Stephen. It is chucking-out time at Burke's.

EPISODE 15: CIRCE; 422-593 (Mabbot street, the brothel district; midnight; legs; magic; whore; hallucination). This, the "Walpurgis Night" scene, is the most difficult for the unprepared reader. Critics are not agreed as to precisely what Joyce is trying to do, or how he does it. Perhaps the sanest explanation is that Joyce, who had met and was deeply influenced by Freud and Jung, utilizes their methods in letting the chief characters, Bloom and Stephen, run off into hallucinations in which their innermost thoughts, frustrations, fears, and hopes are exposed in grotesque anthropomorphic shapes. The episode is a series of transformation scenes in which inanimate objects, persons, unuttered and uttered thoughts, memories, etc., come to life and speak. Although all the action takes place in and around the brothel, the scene is a constantly-changing montage. Also, these scenes take place instantaneously; e.g., the long action of pp. 469-488 occurs in the instant between two sentences spoken by Zoe: "make a stump speech out of it," and "talk away till you're black in the face." All metaphors become literal. *Odyssey*: After escaping the Lestrygonians, Ulysses and his men come to the land of the enchantress Circe. Circe changes his men into swine, but Ulysses through the agency of moly, a magic herb given him by Hermes, is able to counter Circe's magic and release his men from the spell. *Ulysses*: It is midnight; an hour has passed since the close of the last episode. Stephen has been abandoned by all his friends except Lynch (Judas) and Bloom, who follows him at a distance in a wild train ride around the city. The action begins with a description in grotesques of Dublin's red light district. Cissy Caffrey appears singing an obscene song about "the leg of the duck" (which has thematic

meaning). Two soldiers enter the district, then Stephen and Lynch, followed by Bloom. Stephen comes in blaspheming (chants the Introit); Lynch kicks a dog which reappears in various forms and breeds throughout the episode (possibly Argus, the faithful dog of Ulysses). Bloom gets a stitch in his side running after Stephen; he sees the glow of a distant fire, hopes it is Boylan's house, and in his reverie is almost struck by a tram. The dog, now a retriever, follows Bloom, to whom Rudy, his dead son, appears. Stephen's Shakespeare theory is echoed when Rudy addresses Bloom as his son. Molly appears in Turkish costume—probably conjured up by Bloom's thinking of her lotion. She is followed by Mrs. Breen. The sight of the two policemen pricks Bloom's conscience; he imagines himself on trial at which several women he has lusted after rise to accuse him. After a long trial (to p. 462) he is sentenced to hang. He comes back to reality, and reaches the house run by BELLA COHEN (Circe) and staffed by Zoe, Kitty, and Florry. Stephen is inside, and Zoe asks Bloom if he is Stephen's father. Bloom's black shriveled potato, which entered the story earlier, is now identified as moly. Zoe thinks Bloom talks too much, and Bloom imagines himself to be a great Irish demagogue. After a long history, he falls from power and is cremated (488). Bloom enters the brothel, where he finds Lynch and Stephen. Florry's notion that some have predicted the end of the world this summer sets another train of phantasms in motion (495). In this phantasmagoria appears the queerest character of all, Bloom's grandfather, Lipoti Virag. Virag turns into a moth just as Stephen sits down at the piano. Zoe tells about a priest who visited as customer two nights previously. Florry suspects Stephen of being a priest, and Stephen accordingly imagines himself to be Cardinal Dedalus, primate of all Ireland (512). Zoe gives them aphrodisiacal chocolates just before the madam, Bella, comes in. Bella, like Molly,



is a masterful woman, and Bloom imagines himself in a masochistic role, abject to her (516). Bella becomes a man, Bello, and Bloom becomes a woman treated with numerous indignities (to p. 532). The nymph cut from a girlie magazine and hanging over Bloom's bed comes to life and cavorts in a woodland based on the leafy wallpaper of the brothel. She taunts Bloom, who reverts to adolescence (535). Reality (542): Bella asks for pay; Stephen, besotted, pays too much; Bloom takes over his finances. Lynch goes to the sofa with Kitty; Zoe reads Stephen's palm. For Bloom the bitterest fantasy: (552) he imagines himself at a keyhole watching Boylan and Molly. Bloom and Stephen look in a mirror and see there Shakespeare instead of themselves (metempsychosis). They dance to Bella's pianola; the dance becomes a fantastic montage of Bloom's and Stephen's experiences earlier in the day. Stephen suddenly thinks of his mother, and Buck appears to taunt him. Stephen goes berserk and smashes the chandelier with his cane (567). He runs out into the street, where the two soldiers grab him and accuse him of having insulted their girl, Cissy Caffrey. Bloom tries to pull Stephen away (574) and another fantasy follows, in which Edward VII, Rumbold, another Croppy Boy (who is hanged) and Old Gummy Granny (the milk woman, Ireland, of Episode 1) appear. After a fantastic black mass (583) Private Carr punches Stephen in the face, knocking him down. The police come (588) and despite Bloom's intercession, are about to arrest Stephen when Corny Kelleher, who has escorted a couple of tired businessmen to the district, gets him off. Bloom and Kelleher exchange excuses for being in the district.

EPISODE 16: EUMAEUS; 597-649 (the cabman's shelter of Skin-the-Goat; 1:00 a.m.; nerves; navigation; sailors; narrative, old). *Odyssey*: Ulysses returns to Ithaca disguised as a beggar, and stops at the hut of Eumaeus, the

swineherd. Telemachus meets his father there, and they prepare to return to the palace to clear out the suitors. *Ulysses*: No cabs are available, so Bloom walks Stephen to a nearby cabman's shelter (diner), lecturing him on the evils of drink and vice. Bloom reviles the police and Stephen's faithless companions. They are hailed by watchman Gumley, who knows Stephen's father, and meet "Lord" John Corley, who has degenerated from a reputedly noble (bar sinister) family to the position of a beggar. Stephen gives him half a crown. After listening to the mellifluous language of a group of Italians, they enter the diner, run by Skin-the-Goat Fitzharris, the Invincible, assassinator in the Phoenix Park murders in 1882 (Eumaeus). In the shelter they meet Murphy, sailor on the *Rosevean* (p. 51), who recalls having seen Simon Dedalus shoot two eggs off bottles behind his back (Ulysses' prowess as a marksman). He says he is home after 7 years' wandering. This sets in motion a number of Enoch Arden allusions (608). As he talks, Bloom's thoughts run back to Molly. A streetwalker peers in (616) and is run off by Skin-the-Goat. Bloom announces his disapproval of prostitution, but Stephen says she sells only her body, but there are those in Ireland who sell their souls. He goes on to decry God and the oppression of the Irish. Bloom goes off into a tirade against intolerance, especially anti-Semitism (628). Bloom sees in the paper the writeup of Paddy's funeral and is irked by the misspelling of his name—"Boom." Reading on, he expects to see any day now a "return of Parnell" story, which recalls several more Enoch Arden stories, including two in which the identification was made by a tattoo. They talk about Parnell, who was brought to his fall by a Spanish woman. Bloom pulls out Molly's picture and shows it about (although he and Molly have had no sexual intercourse in ten years). Bloom and Stephen leave the diner (644) and talk about music.

EPISODE 17: ITHACA; 650-722

(Bloom's house; 2:00 a.m.; skeleton; science; comets; catechism, impersonal). Joyce's purpose in this episode is not clear. It appears to be a *reductio ad absurdum* of the book; instead, e.g., of Bloom's revenging himself on Boylan (Eurymachus) as Ulysses bloodily does, his chief feeling is equanimity. One might say that Joyce was ridiculing his own themes; still, this was his favorite episode. The technique is question and answer like the Catholic catechism and elementary science textbooks; it contrasts the scientific nature of Bloom with the artistic nature of Stephen, with science often being ridiculed (e.g., p. 663). *Odyssey*: Disguised as a beggar and recognized only by an old servant and his dog, Argus, Ulysses bears the taunts of the suitors. Penelope, in a last effort to delay their importunities, proposes the bow test. After all fail even to string Ulysses' great bow, he throws off his disguise and shoots an arrow through 12 ax-heads. With Telemachus, he kills all the suitors and hangs the unfaithful servants. He is reunited to Penelope. *Ulysses*: Stephen and Bloom walk to Bloom's house, discussing all manner of subjects. On arriving at 7 Eccles Street, Bloom discovers he has forgotten his key, and he must break in. He enters and fills the kettle (typically in this episode, each action is expanded in ridiculous detail and gobbledegook; here, the action of the faucet is analyzed by the director of the water works). Bloom washes his hands with the lemon soap (656) and makes cocoa for Stephen (660). Knowing that Stephen is a poet, he thinks of his own efforts as a child to write poetry (662). The rest of the episode goes on to probe in question and answer, the life and opinions of Bloom. Stephen recites the medieval anti-Semitic ballad "Hugh of Lincoln" (674). Stephen and Bloom resolve to meet again (but they don't). Stephen decides to go home; they go outside, look at the sky, prompting an astronomical disquisition (682). Bloom goes back in and stumbles over the furniture

Molly has been rearranging (the strangeness of Ulysses' house on his return). He makes a spill of the Agendath Netaim prospectus and uses it to light an incense cone. Undressing, he thinks of his ambition—to build an ideal house (697), which he hopes to finance by a number of Lagodan schemes. He thinks of himself as a world traveler (710) and gets into bed beside Molly, who had retired earlier. He analyzes his feelings about her adultery as those of "envy, jealousy, abnegation, and equanimity"—equanimity, for after all, adultery is the least of sins. He wonders whether it devolves upon him to uphold the husband's position by some show of retaliation, and he accordingly reviews some of the conventional revenges. He tells Molly of the adventures of the day—with some reservations (720). They drift off to sleep, with Bloom thinking himself a weary traveler, companion of Sinbad the Sailor, and Molly beginning her stream of consciousness soliloquy.

EPISODE 18: PENELOPE; 723-768 (Molly's bed; after 2:00 a.m.; flesh; earth; monologue, female). This is the most unusual part of *Ulysses*. If we accept it as one sentence, it is the longest sentence in any literature, 25,000 words long. It is stream-of-consciousness in its barest and extremest form. In this episode Molly symbolizes not only Penelope (certain rationalizations have to be made to equate her with Penelope at all) but the Earth Mother (Gea-Tellus) and Goddess of Love (Ishtar, Astarte, Aphrodite, Venus, Mamakilya, the Virgin Mary, etc.) Careful analysts have found evidence in her "wobbling" thoughts to show that Joyce meant to parallel the dozen separate movements of the earth. Whenever "woman," "bottom," or "man" is mentioned, her thoughts "wobble." Similarly with other words, e.g., "Poldy," her thoughts are gravitated off, as the tide by the moon. *Odyssey*: No strict parallel; this is more in the manner of an epilogue, probing the mind of Penelope-Molly. *Ulysses*: Silent beside Bloom,

Molly lets her mind run on. Bloom has asked her to bring him breakfast in bed next morning; if she does, it will change not only their relationship but Bloom's attitude toward life—he will probably recover his manhood. She suspects he was up to some sort of amatory mischief, but concludes that since he is not "off his feed," it is not love (723). She recalls her earlier jealousy of a servant girl and thinks of him as an unsatisfactory lover (726). She thinks of more successful lovers she has had, even the tenor Bartell d'Arcy (734). A trainwhistle in the distance sounds like "Love's Old Sweet Song" (739); she thinks of Gibraltar, of a girl friend there, of her father there, of

her first lover there, Lt. Mulvey, of her seduction by him (748); of her daughter Milly, and how much like herself, when young, Milly is (752). She gets up to go to the commode (755), returns to bed, where she comments on Bloom's odd sleeping posture (756). Bloom is now asleep. She thinks of what he said about the young man Stephen, and muses on how intriguing it would be if Stephen should come and live with them (760). Like Bloom, she concludes that adultery is not a serious sin (765), but her last thoughts go back to her husband; her final "yes I said yes I will Yes" is an affirmation not only of Bloom, but of life.

*Note: Reprints (in covers) of Professor Greenway's guide are available at 25 cents each from NCTE headquarters, 704 South Sixth Street, Champaign, Illinois.*

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### From Ithaca to Dublin

Clearly, then, Joyce's Leopold Bloom is not simply a Ulysses in modern dress, nor is *Ulysses* a sordid naturalistic version of the tradition in the style of [Jean] Giono or [Eyvind] Johnson. . . . Unlike Giono's novel (and its predecessors, the seventeenth-century burlesques, the Roman *Priapea*, and the Greek comedies on the Ulysses theme), it is not mock-heroic or anti-heroic. Though it contains many sordid details, it is essentially a study in compassionate humanism, by means of pity and salaciousness effecting its catharsis of suchlike tendencies. In the end Ulysses emerges, as he does in the *Odyssey*, as a man who by prudence and endurance, can overcome the dangers and disasters of life. . . . The basic humanistic elements in conduct, motive, and environment, are identical for the Prince of Ithaca and for this humble citizen of Dublin. . . .

—W. B. STANFORD, *The Ulysses Theme* (1954), p. 214

# Star-Equilibrium in *Women in Love*

MARK SPILKA

AT THE END of *Sons and Lovers* a man is born; at the end of *The Rainbow*, a woman; and in *Women in Love* a man and a woman meet and marry. Here is a simple formula, too simple perhaps to account for the complex structure of the novels at hand, yet suitable enough for the conscious attempt, on Lawrence's part, to work out the conditions of manhood, womanhood and marriage, as he experienced or understood them in his own life. Beyond doubt, Rupert Birkin in *Women in Love* is a further projection of Paul Morel in *Sons and Lovers*: he is the Lawrence-figure, that is to say, the author embodied in his own work, but objectively embodied and integral to the work, and not a mere mouthpiece like Mark Rampion, the Lawrence-figure in Aldous Huxley's *Point Counter Point*. Birkin is a man who wrestles with his own soul; like Paul Morel, he strives to understand what happens inside as well as around himself. As Lawrence explains it: "This struggle for verbal consciousness should not be left out in art. It is a very great part of life. It is not superimposition of a theory. It is the passionate struggle into conscious being."

What are the conditions of "conscious being," then, which Birkin struggles to define in *Women in Love*? For one thing, we know that he sloughs off past encumbrances, as Ursula Brangwen did before him in *The Rainbow*. In the early chapters, for example, Birkin rids himself of his former mistress, Hermione Roddice, a *Kulturträger* who moves among the foremost circles in art, society, and thought, but lacks a "robust self." Like so many Laurentian figures, Hermione depends too heavily upon one or two elements of being: will, spirit, and intellect are fused, within this woman, into a single passion for final abstract knowledge. Such

knowledge means power to Hermione, power to hold all life within the scope of her conscious intellect, to toy with the passions there, to reduce them to finite particles of thought, and to reduce even Rupert Birkin to his abstract spiritual essence. And it is here, with reference to Hermione's ravenous mind, that Lawrence strikes most deeply into the problem of diseased intellectualism—far more deeply, in fact, than the Faust legend will ordinarily take us. We know, for example, that Faust's lust for knowledge lies at the root of his mortal anguish—that the very *pointlessness* of his earthly life is part of the legend's truth. Nevertheless, his chief punishment comes in hell, in the after-life, so that the legend fails to illuminate the intrinsic destructivity of the knowledge-lust: it fails to show us that the mind can thwart and destroy the life within and around a man, on this earth, in its vain attempt to *command* emotional vitality; or conversely, that it can act in its proper role, as an instrument for self-fulfillment. (For the best development of this aspect of the novel, see F. R. Leavis' excellent series of articles in *Scrutiny*, Autumn 1950, March 1951, June 1951.)

Lawrence does reveal these truths, however, in *Women in Love*: "Of course," cries Hermione, the Faustian heroine, "there *can* be no reason, no *excuse* for education, except the joy and beauty of knowledge in itself . . . nothing has meant so much to me in all life, as certain knowledge. . . . Yes, it is the greatest thing in life—to *know*. It is really to be happy, to be free." But Birkin, the Laurentian hero, argues that knowledge is a finite, bottled sort of attainment, and that true liberty, or spontaneity, can never be *known*, in the strictest sense of the word, but only experienced by the emotional self and then treated with proper reverence by the mind.

So he proceeds to challenge her pretense of freedom in a variety of ways. By sketching a goose, for instance, which lives from other centers than the mind, he strikes at the self-created void within his mistress. And a bit later on, by thwarting her powerful will, by attacking her belief in spiritual equality, he draws her vicious nature to the surface—for Hermione now tries to smash him over the head, at an opportune moment, with a ball of lapis lazuli. Given the nervous tension between the pair, given the lack of sturdy selfhood in the one and the lively separateness of the other, her blow becomes as inevitable as Birkin's strange reaction to it: for Birkin, dazed but alert, now leaves her room and heads for a nearby forest, where he strips off his clothes and moves naked among the flowers and fir-trees. He takes satisfaction there from the sting of the fir-boughs on his skin, from the smooth hardness of the birch-trunks, and from the "lovely, subtle, responsive vegetation," which literally enters into his blood, into his "living self." It is a communion scene, and admittedly a strange one; yet there are precedents for it in the work of writers like George Meredith, Samuel Butler, or (surprisingly enough) Paul Valéry, who wrote some of his finest poems "in that fertile region where giant trees grow like grass, where grass grows with incredible force and facility, and where the vigor of vegetative life is inexhaustible." Valéry goes on to say, "My work was what it was. But I felt my mind possessed of a vitality that today seems to me the most enviable of possessions." Lawrence makes a similar point in *Lady Chatterley's Lover*: "It needs sheer sensuality even to purify and quicken the mind." The sick mind, the plunge into the quickening bath of life: once past our initial bias, the vegetation scene in *Women in Love* acquires both meaning and dramatic impact.

Birkin continues to use the mind, however, as a means toward spontaneity; in fact, he holds that the achievement of "spontaneous being" involves an expan-

sion and a liberation of mind, not a suppression of all consciousness: hence the young people of today have "too little" rather than too much mind; they are "imprisoned within a limited, false set of concepts." Or as Lawrence would later phrase it:

Our education from the start has *taught* us a certain range of emotions, what to feel and what not to feel, and how to feel the feelings we allow ourselves to feel. . . . This feeling only what you allow yourselves to feel at last kills all capacity for feeling, and in the higher emotional range you feel nothing at all. This has come to pass in our present century. The higher emotions are strictly dead. They have to be faked.

Thus Birkin's "passionate struggle into conscious being" becomes a problem in discovery; he must somehow replace the popular concepts of the feelings with broader, deeper notions, if only to release the "higher emotions" within himself, and within Ursula Brangwen, the girl he later marries. "The point about love," he tells Ursula, "is that we hate the word because we have vulgarized it. It ought to be prescribed, tabooed from utterance, for many years, till we get a new, better idea." This "new, better idea" is soon forthcoming: Birkin calls it "star-equilibrium," and he sets it forth in opposition to Ursula's belief that love surpasses the individual, and to Hermione's belief in spiritual and abstract communion. Such forms of love involve the loss of selfhood; they depend upon the ancient theory that men and women are but broken fragments of one whole, while Birkin insists that men and women have been singled out from an original mixture into pure individuality; accordingly, they must polarize rather than merge in love—hence star-equilibrium: "a pure balance of two single beings—as the stars balance each other." Or as Lawrence puts it in *Aaron's Rod*:

Two eagles in mid-air, maybe, like Whitman's Dalliance of Eagles. Two eagles in mid-air, grappling, whirling, coming to their intensification of love-oneness there in mid-



air. In mid-air the love consummation. But all the time each lifted on its own wings: each bearing itself up on its own wings at every moment of the mid-air love consummation. That is the splendid love-way.

Splendid, for Lawrence, because it preserves the sanctity of the individual soul, gives love direction and instrumental purpose, and thus keeps marriage from becoming a romantic stew-pot, from which all flavor and body quickly boil away. Splendid, again, because the source of life lies beyond love, and therefore the individual soul, with its roots in that source, takes precedence over love: the soul "submits to the yoke and leash of love, but never forfeits its own proud individual singleness, even while it loves and yields."

Lawrence transcends mere egotism here; he perceives (as F. R. Leavis insists) that life takes place only in the individual, and that it is the business of love, marriage, religion, and social effort to bring about fulfillment in the individual. "The central law of all organic life," he tells us elsewhere, "is that each organism is intrinsically isolate and single in itself." But "the secondary law of life" is this: that the individual can only be fulfilled through contact and communion with his fellow men and women. And of course, the most vital contact of all occurs between a man and a woman, so long as it preserves the intrinsic "otherness" of each participant. "Men live by love," writes Lawrence, "but die, or cause death, if they love too much."

## II

For convenience, these ideas have been presented in theoretical form. But Birkin's struggle to define them is always part of a larger and far more dramatic experience. Perhaps the classroom scene, between Birkin, Ursula, and Hermione, will help to illustrate the point. Birkin's quickness and independence, Ursula's "lostness" and expectancy, have just been sketched in for us, briefly, in the opening chapters. Now the two met in Ursula's classroom as

Birkin, the school-inspector, makes his rounds. It is a dark, drowsy day, there are catkins on the children's desks, and Ursula stands in front of the class, giving a final lesson on "the structure and meaning of the catkins." From the west window a shaft of light falls rich and ruddy on the children's heads, and when Birkin enters the room, his face appears in this vital flood of light, "gleaming like fire," which startles Ursula terribly, almost to the point of faintness. But she soon recovers, and Birkin proceeds to underscore the conditions of their future conflict, and of its resolution:

"You are doing catkins?" he asked, picking up a piece of hazel from a scholar's desk in front of him. "Are they as far out as this? I hadn't noticed them this year."

He looked absently at the tassel of hazel in his hand.

"The red ones too!" he said, looking at the flickers of crimson that came from the female bud.

Then he went in among the desks, to see the scholars' books. Ursula watched his intent progress. There was a stillness in his motion that hushed the activities of her heart. She seemed to be standing aside in arrested silence, watching him move in another, concentrated world. His presence was so quiet, almost like a vacancy in the corporate air.

Suddenly he lifted his face to her, and her heart quickened at the flicker of his voice.

"Give them some crayons, won't you?" he said, "so that they can make the gynaecious flowers red, and the androgynous yellow. I'd chalk them in plain, chalk in nothing else, merely the red and the yellow. Outline scarcely matters in this case. There is just the one fact to emphasize."

"I haven't got any crayons," said Ursula.

"There will be some somewhere—red and yellow, that's all you want."

Ursula sent out a boy on a quest.

"It will make the books untidy," she said to Birkin, flushing deeply.

"Not very," he said. "You must mark in these things obviously. It's the fact you want to emphasize, not the subjective impression to record. What's the fact?—red

little spiky stigmas of the female flower, dangling yellow male catkin, yellow pollen flying from one to the other. Make a pictorial record of the fact, as a child does when drawing a face—two eyes, one nose, mouth with teeth—so—.” And he drew a figure on the blackboard.

I have quoted Lawrence at length to bring out his ability to deliver, vividly and symbolically, a complex situation between a man and a woman. As Birkin puts it, there is just the one fact to emphasize: the male and female flowers, brightly colored and therefore singled out in their isolate loveliness, with the pollen flying between them. Quite obviously, this is a communion scene, a concrete illustration of “star-equilibrium,” and Lawrence works it out with deftness and economy. Fact and symbol are one here, and in the next moment, when Hermione appears in unconventional pursuit of Birkin, the classroom situation broadens naturally into a tense quarrel on the problem of conscious knowledge and spontaneous life. With the class dismissed, Birkin begins a series of verbal assaults which prepare us for the pond-stoning scene, later on in the novel. Each argument smashes, that is, like a heavy stone into the shimmering surface consciousness by which Hermione lives; and each argument smashes, as well, at the female conceit which both of the rivals now exhibit: “The two women were jeering at him, jeering him into nothingness,” thinks Birkin, and later, as he hammers away at their self-conceit—“There was silence in the room. Both women were hostile and resentful.” Then Hermione interrupts him, appropriately enough, when he speaks of the need to live from other centers than the mind, and the two of them leave the classroom in mutual anger. In the meantime, Ursula has been attracted by the rich vitality which seems to emanate from Birkin’s face and thighs. She switches off the light now, and sits down in the darkness alone, absorbed in thought. Then she begins to weep bitterly, “but whether from misery or joy, she never

knew.” The reader knows, however, that the classroom lesson has reached her heart—that “the structure and meaning of the catkins” has been brought home to her. For surely Lawrence has made a brilliant “pictorial record” here of any number of significant facts, “as a child does when drawing a face—two eyes, one nose, mouth with teeth—so—.”

I am going to skip swiftly over a number of important scenes now in order to concentrate on the chapter called “Excuse,” in which the struggle between Ursula and Birkin is finally resolved. It can be easily demonstrated, I think, that these intervening chapters are organized, successfully, along the same lines as the classroom scene, with the symbols welling up naturally out of an emotional situation, and giving it sharper focus: Hermione’s murder weapon, for instance, a hard, finite ball of lapis lazuli; or Birkin’s favorite island and his proud male cat; or the drowned bodies at the Crich estate, with the girl’s arm locked tightly about her “rescuer’s” neck; then Birkin’s pond, Ursula’s angry father, and finally, Birkin’s cat again, arching his back to Hermione’s subtle strokes. These scenes give order and direction to the ritual tug-of-war between Birkin and Ursula, as the lovers fight, yield, or stand aloof from each other till that final burst of anger which leaves them free for consummation. I refer, of course, to the afternoon drive in Birkin’s motor-car, when he offers Ursula three rings and she accepts them; but a moment later she insists that Birkin still belongs to his former mistress, Hermione, and he calls her a fool for saying so; then he stops the car, and she clambers out and lashes back at him with magnificent invective:

Yes, I am. I *am* a fool. And thank God for it. I’m too big a fool to swallow your cleverness. God be praised. You go to your women. . . . Go to your spiritual brides—but don’t come to me as well, because I’m not having any, thank you. You’re not satisfied, are you? Your spiritual brides can’t

give you what you want, they aren't common and fleshy enough for you, are they? So you come to me, and keep them in the back-ground. I know your dirty little game. . . . Then *go* to her, that's all I say, *go* to her, *go*. Ha, she spiritual. . . . What does she care for, what is her spirituality? What is it? . . . I tell you it's *dirt, dirt*, and nothing *but* dirt. . . . That's what she is at the bottom. And all the rest is pretence—but you love it. You love the sham spirituality, it's your food. And why? Because of the dirt underneath. Do you think I don't know the foulness of your sex life—and hers?—I do. And it's that foulness you want, you liar. Then have it, have it. You're such a liar.

A passing bicycle gives Birkin a chance to reply. He admits his own perverseness, his secret pleasure in the whole process of spiritual self-destruction with Hermione. "But Hermione's spiritual intimacy is no rottener than your emotional-jealous intimacy," he counters. She throws the rings in his face and stalks off.

Birkin feels tired and weak, but relieved and, in a strangely *Dantesque* manner, purged of the last remnants of his diseased love for Hermione. He wants Ursula to come back, he sits down on a bank and picks up the fallen rings as "little tokens of the reality of beauty," but he still maintains his old position:

Fusion, fusion, this horrible fusion of two beings, which every woman and most men

insisted on, was it not nauseous and horrible anyhow, whether it was a fusion of the spirit or of the emotional body? Hermione saw herself as the perfect Idea, to which all men must come: And Ursula was the perfect Womb, the bath of birth, to which all men must come! And both were horrible. Why could they not remain individuals, limited by their own limits? Why this dreadful all comprehensiveness, this hateful tyranny? Why not leave the other being free, why try to absorb, or melt, or merge? One might abandon oneself utterly to the *moments*, but not to any other being.

A moment later Ursula drifts back and affirms his stand. "See what a flower I found you," she tells him, and this offering of the life-symbol serves as a final pledge between them: he has already brought her the rings, the bonds of love; now she brings him the flower, the confirmation of single loveliness of life, and their "freedom together" is established. Later they take tea in a private room in town, and Ursula, embracing him, finds a kind of physical confirmation of the life-source at the back and base of his loins. Then the chapter ends with a perfect fusion of action and symbolism, as the two children of an industrial age drive on to Sherwood forest, take each other there in "mystic love," and spend their first night together in their parked automobile, in the depths of the forest.

# Intention and Achievement in *All for Love*

EVERETT H. EMERSON, HAROLD E. DAVIS, AND IRA JOHNSON

ALL FOR LOVE "has one fault equal to many . . . that, by admitting the romantic omnipotence of love," Dryden "has recommended, as laudable and worthy of imitation, that conduct, which, through all ages, the good have censured as vicious, and the bad despised as foolish." This criticism of Dryden's masterpiece by Dr. Johnson (*Lives*, ed. Hill, 1905, I, 361) has received less attention than it deserves, for it points out an important confusion between Dryden's intention and his achievement, and it leads to a re-evaluation which demonstrates other basic discrepancies.

Dryden declared in his preface to the tragedy that he was attracted to the subject by the "excellency of the moral"; that the "chief persons represented were famous patterns of unlawful love; and their end accordingly was unfortunate." For Dryden the love affair of Antony and Cleopatra contained good potentialities for tragedy because it exemplified punishment for a love "founded upon vice"; it made virtue attractive and vice repellent, and therefore met the requirement for poetic justice. But Dryden was aware of some of the weaknesses in this ready-made moral exemplum: he believed that the lovers do not demand full tragic pity because "the crimes of love, which they both committed, were not occasioned by any necessity, or fatal ignorance, but were wholly voluntary; since our passions are, or ought to be, within our power" (*Essays*, ed. Ker, 1900, I, 191-192). The inevitability of tragedy is lacking, according to Dryden, since the lovers are not forced into their actions. But if we look closely at the play, we find that it does not present a picture of "the crimes of love" and of unlawful lovers being punished for their voluntary

transgressions. Instead, it gives us almost the opposite: a love that is inevitable, an uncontrollable force; and the lovers vindicated because of their passion. Our sympathies are drawn to the lovers and held there because their passions are not within their power. At least from this point of view Dryden builded better than he knew.

The theme of *All for Love* is the conflict of reason and honor with passion in the form of illicit love. From the preface it seems that Dryden wished to show how Antony, torn between these two, chooses unreasonable, passionate love and is consequently punished for his denial of reason. Let us see how Dryden presented this conflict in the play itself.

At the beginning of Act I, the struggle is evident. Antony, "Unbent, unsinew'd, made a Womans Toy, / Shrunk from the vast extent of all his honours," hopes to "cure his mind of Love." Ventidius, the "old true-stamp Roman," sides with the world of reason, of "plainness, fierceness, rugged virtue," by cursing the joy and revelry of the Egyptians, and by deriding Alexas, the eunuch (the "unmanned") as "Antony's other fate" (*Works*, ed. Summers, 1932, IV, 192, 194-196). Aware of his degradation, Antony admits the truth of Ventidius's charges:

. . . I have lost my reason, have disgrac'd  
The name of Soldier, with inglorious ease.  
In the full Vintage of my flowing honors,  
Sate still, and saw it prest by other hands.  
(p. 199)

When Antony resolves to kill himself because the world is not worth keeping, Ventidius offers to die with him. Thus, early in the play some of the contradictions are evident. Although Ventidius argues for reason, he wants to do an un-

reasonable thing because of his deep love for Antony. In terms of the morality of Dryden's preface, Ventidius' idea is wrong; in the context of the play itself, it seems admirable. We thus have between intention and achievement a split, which, though minor, presages more serious difficulties.

At the close of Act I, Ventidius' persuasion is temporarily victorious, and Antony returns to reason and honor: he declares to Ventidius: "Our hearts and arms are still the same" (p. 203).

In Act II appears Cleopatra, Antony's love and his ruin, who attempts to bring Antony back into her world. The opening and closing lines of the act indicate the progress of the action and her success:

*Cleopatra.* What shall I do, or whither shall I turn?

Ventidius has o'rcome, and he will go.  
... (p. 204)

*Antony.* How I long for night!

That both the sweets of mutual love may try. (p. 216)

But Cleopatra is far more than the evil temptress, offering ruin, that Dryden seems to indicate in his preface: instead, she illustrates a moral complexity which reason cannot solve.

*Iras.* Call reason to assist you.

*Cleopatra.* I have none.

And none would have: my Love's a noble madness,

Which shows the cause deserv'd it. Moderate sorrow

Fits vulgar Love, and for a vulgar Man:  
But I have lov'd with such transcendent

passion,

I soard, at first, quite out of Reasons view,  
And now am lost above it. (p. 204)

Her transcendent love—comparable to Ventidius' love for Antony—is not the negation of reason, but an emotion which rises *above* it.

In Act II Alexas speaks as the man of unimpassioned reason:

You [Cleopatra] misjudge;

You see through Love, and that deludes your sight:

As what is strait, seems crooked through the Water;

But I, who bear my reason undisturb'd  
Can see this Antony ... (p. 206)

Our undisturbed man of reason is, ironically, "unmanned," a eunuch; and if this speech is designed to identify him with reason, then his later failures—his counsels to Cleopatra in Act V to negotiate with Caesar, his lie to Antony, his scheme to make Antony jealous—have the effect of discrediting reason. He "sees through reason" and *his* sight is deluded.

With the introduction of Octavia in Act III Dryden feared that "the compassion she moved to herself and children was destructive to that which I reserved for Antony and Cleopatra" (*Essays*, I, 192). The passage indicates that Dryden regarded Octavia as a sympathetic character who would arouse compassion. But it hardly seems an accident that Octavia, the incarnation of honor, is so well drawn as a "respectable" woman, because it is her pride, her regard for honor in the form of her reputation, which qualifies her "love" as something far more of a vice than the love of Antony and Cleopatra. Octavia is so undeniably self-righteous—and it is difficult to believe that she would not have seemed so to a Restoration audience—that Antony does what any man would do when he returns to Cleopatra in Act V. A good illustration of Octavia's morality is her plea:

Go to him. Children, go;

Kneel to him, take him by the hand, speak to him:

For you may speak, and he may own you too,

Without a blush; and so he cannot all  
His Children: go, I say, and pull him to me,  
And pull him to your selves, from that bad Woman.

You, Agrippina, hang upon his arms;

And you, Antonio, clasp about his waist:

If he will shake you off, if he will dash you  
Against the Pavement, you must bear it,

Children;

For you are mine, and I was born to suffer.  
(p. 226)



Here Antony, the Roman conqueror of worlds, and passionate, mature lover, is being chided by a virtuous wife (who, to Shakespeare, was a "statue rather than a breather"), and being checked in such a way that he loses not only his dignity but also his masculine honor. This sudden intrusion of "virtue" into the scene may be morally necessary, but Dryden makes it so much less attractive than the compelling physical love affair that he is obviously aligning himself with passion and against the reason and virtue he urges in his preface.

Even the sophisticated "serpent of the Nile" is dampened by this overbearing virtue and becomes a pale shadow of Octavia:

*Cleopatra.* I have suffer'd more.  
You bear the specious Title of a Wife,  
To guild your Cause, and draw the pitying  
World  
To favour it: the World contemns poor me;  
For I have lost my Honour, lost my Fame,  
And stain'd the glory of my Royal House,  
And all to bear the branded Name of Mis-  
tress,  
There wants but life, and that too I would  
lose  
For him I love. (p. 229)

She feels wronged and pities herself. Dryden seems to have struggled to give Cleopatra some of the "nobility" of the wronged Octavia. But the effort was unsuccessful; Cleopatra's false cloak of virtue does not enrich her personality but detracts from her essential character of mature sophistication: she is hardly a woman who would mourn the loss of honor through love. She loves, we remember, with a "transcendent passion." This desperate, illicit love of Antony, a world-weary Roman, and the beautiful, sensual, and cunning Cleopatra has so enmeshed them that they are unable to control themselves, although both are well aware of what they are doing. So wholly outside this passion are Octavia's middle-class morality and Cleopatra's attempt to echo it that their behavior is not tragic but maudlin.

In Act V Dryden seems to have been faced once and for all with the choice of punishing his lovers and proving the "excellency of the moral" or closing the play with the victory over reason and honor which has been inevitable since the first act. Antony's closing lines indicate that Dryden abandoned altogether his ideal of poetic justice:

Ten years love,  
And not a moment lost, but all improv'd  
To th' utmost joys: What Ages have we  
liv'd?  
And now to die each others; and, so dying,  
While hand in hand we walk in Groves  
below,  
Whole Troops of Lovers Ghosts shall flock  
about us,  
And all the Train be ours. (p. 258)

No speech after this suggests a moral condemnation of the lovers. Rather the play ends on quite another note:

And Fame, to late Posterity, shall tell,  
No lovers liv'd so great, or dy'd so well.  
(p. 261)

Faced with the opposing viewpoints of Dryden's preface on the one hand and the play itself with its sub-title on the other, we had best take *The World Well Lost* as the more accurate statement of Dryden's intention.

In his preface Dryden informed his readers that his intention was to "follow the practice of the ancients" (*Essays*, I, 200), to adhere to neoclassical concepts of tragedy. But once again Dryden was at odds with his intention; although *All for Love* is certainly correct in terms of the physical properties of classical tragedy (or at least Dryden's understanding of them), the play does not provide a true tragic catharsis. Although it would be an error to rely too completely upon a comparison, an examination of the immediate cause of the tragedy as compared with that in Shakespeare's *Antony and Cleopatra* can be useful in illustrating this weakness of *All For Love*. We should not judge Dryden's play a failure because it does not do things that Shakespeare's

does; it is a different play, conceived with considerably different dramatic intentions. But in both plays the lovers die, and die within the dramatic framework of the tragedy.

In Shakespeare's play the tragedy of Antony and Cleopatra is brought about almost wholly by the love affair; all through the play we feel the awful compulsion of this love forcing them to their inevitable end. Dryden gave to the early part of his play the same impression of inexorability (even though he failed to recognize it, if we can believe his preface). But the destruction later of Antony and Cleopatra is not occasioned by their love alone. Instead, the motivation for their deaths, the quarrel which leads to the suicide of Antony, is the result of the blundering lies and machinations of the well-meaning Alexas, who is not directly involved in the love affair. Specifically, it is his lie to Antony about Cleopatra's death which causes Antony to kill himself and later Cleopatra to do the same. Although there is a similar chain of events in Shakespeare's play, there Cleopatra agrees to Charmian's subterfuge (hiding in the monument, the false suicide); whereas in *All for Love* Alexas on his own initiative tells the lie which sets off the chain of forces. Thus he assumes the immediate responsibility for the deaths, which are not the inevitable result of the love affair but the result of a casual mischance (the mistake due, ironically, to Alexas' faith in reason). The action moves from the lovers' entangling themselves in inexorable fate to a simple accident, not caused by the lovers themselves.

We might stretch our credulity considerably and try to see Alexas as the perpetrator of poetic justice, the "punishment" inflicted upon the lovers. But then the whole problem of sympathies and mo-

tivations in the play becomes confused because Alexas is the least sympathetic character in the play and is, as such, a poor instrument of justice. Further, as we have seen, the lovers are hardly punished: "No lovers liv'd so great, or dy'd so well." The only clear assumption we can be left with is that Alexas' lies are a dramatic weakness.

The question of where Dryden's sympathies were in the one work which he wrote for his own satisfaction may be a key to the split which we have observed between Dryden's intentions and his achievements. Dryden believed that Antony and Cleopatra should be punished since they violated one of the basic strictures of his age, but yet, as we have seen, he could not regard his tragic hero and heroine as illustrations of a neo-classical moral maxim—for his lovers, the world was "well lost." The result was a conflict, to which the central weaknesses in *All for Love* may be attributed.

Yet the play is not altogether unsuccessful: it has moments of grandeur and some of Dryden's most intense poetry; some have even believed that if Shakespeare had never written, it would be one of the most impressive monuments of English drama. Perhaps so. But this study suggests that the play is full of confusions: the conclusion of the play endorses passionate love, though earlier in the play, and in the preface, passionate love is condemned as unreasonable and therefore immoral; the inevitability of the action is marred because the catastrophe is brought about by an accident; the role of reason in the play is ambiguous. Clearly the play is not what it has been called (by Dobrée, *Restoration Tragedy*, 1929, p. 90): a play which "has a coherence, a direction to one end, in a word, a unity."

# From Abstract to Concrete in *Adam Bede*

WILLIAM M. JONES

George Eliot's skill in constructing her plots should not be overlooked because of the ponderously didactic draperies with which she often shrouds them. Particularly in *Adam Bede* she seems to have been more criticized for a weak conclusion than praised for the manner in which she builds a plot out of a sermon. The tendency now, among those who bother with Eliot at all, is to scan hurriedly the long sermon in the second chapter as just another example of Victorian moralizing. That this lengthy passage does not hold much appeal for modern readers is doubtless true, but to Eliot and her nineteenth-century readers, to whom printed sermons still appealed, this was probably an important portion of the book. Eliot herself seems to have planned this early introduction of the moral portion of the work with the intention of emphasizing it both by its position so near the beginning and by contrast with the first chapter.

Immediately after introducing the hero and his brother in an active, clear-cut scene in the carpenter's shop, Eliot switches to the much longer and more philosophical second chapter, "The Preaching." By setting up such a contrast she manages to obtain a fairly firm grasp on the reader's attention, which is held not by the easily read dialogue of the short first chapter but by the more leisurely developed second. Here, at the beginning of the book, the reader is willing to accept the sermon partly because afterward he may discover new developments in the relationship already mentioned between Seth and the pretty Methodist preacher, partly too perhaps because he is watching the sermon with much the same attitude as that mysterious traveler, a stranger to the region, whom

Eliot has just introduced. The reader, who has seen much of the town through his eyes, now perhaps consents to stay with him to observe the sermon. These devices, which Eliot has employed to point the reader's attention to the sermon, may be her way of warning that here she is going to give him something important. This important message consists of the major moral ideas with which the novel deals.

The novel, as it develops after the sermon, is in reality a lengthy example proving the general statements of Dinah's sermon. The prayer with which she begins might almost serve as Eliot's own invocation for aid in handling her story: "Speak to them, Lord; open their ears to my message." In addition, the pious reader is here presented with a biblical example of the woman at Jacob's well who, with her series of five husbands and some casual visitors, was still treated with respect by Jesus. Eliot here is to treat a similarly sinful woman, Hetty.

From the very beginning of the sermon itself, Eliot succeeds in setting forth the ideas she is to handle. Dinah's story of her childhood belief in the divinity of Wesley suggests the respect with which Methodism is to be handled in the course of the novel. Even Eliot's interest in the working man, which is somewhat annoying in the detailed character sketches of the Harvest Home celebrants in the final book, is first shown here: "Why, you and me, dear friends, are poor. We have been brought up in poor cottages, and have been reared on oat-cake and lived coarse; and we haven't been to school much, nor read books, and we don't know much about anything but what happens just round us." It is in such passages of the sermon as this that Eliot prepares

the way for the type of people she is to handle; the men in Bartle Massey's night school, cottagers out for a holiday at Arthur's birthday party, even the Poyzers, whose life is so limited in space that the thought of having to move a few miles makes Poyser suspect that "We should leave our roots behind us, I doubt, and niver thrive again."

These characters, so different from those of other contemporary novelists, compel Eliot later in a lengthy digression to explain her choice of lowly persons for characters: "In this world there are so many of these common coarse people, who have no picturesque, sentimental wretchedness! It is so needful we should remember their existence, else we may happen to leave them quite out of our religion and philosophy, and frame lofty theories which only fit a world of extremes. Therefore let Art always remind us of them. . . ." But here at the beginning of the work Dinah has already successfully expounded a theory similar to Eliot's own: "So you see, dear friends . . . , Jesus spent his time almost all in doing good to poor people." If Jesus was interested, should Eliot be any the less so, or Eliot's readers? Here is a truth to lead the Victorian reader on, a demanding truth that urges him to do as Jesus did and look to the poor.

Yet with all this emphasis on the poor, the sermon has not reached its climax. Jesus' love for the poor with which Dinah began leads her into the problem of sin. This sin, which cuts off the human soul from Jesus, is Dinah's primary interest, and Eliot's. In Dinah's exhortation to Bessy Cranage, a gay young member of her audience, the intricate connection with the remainder of the plot is clearly seen. "You think of ear-rings and fine gowns and caps, and you never think of the

Saviour who died to save your precious soul. Your cheeks will be shrivelled one day, your hair will be gray, your poor body will be thin and tottering. . . . And Jesus, who stands ready to help you now, won't help you then. . . . He will turn away from you and say, 'Depart from me into everlasting fire!' " This incident, concluding with Bessy's tearing the ear-rings from her ears, presages Hetty's fate. At this point in the sermon we are able to see how carefully Eliot has knitted this long sermon into the whole work and how at the same time the story that follows serves as concrete proof of the truth of Dinah's words.

When, in the privacy of her own room, Hetty had decked herself in shawl and cheap ear-rings, Dinah warned her of her vanity and the danger that might result. But Hetty, heedless of this advice, continued dreaming of wealth. And her first request of a gift from Arthur was for ear-rings—the same ones she was later forced to sell to the innkeeper at Windsor after her search for Arthur had proved fruitless.

Thus we see that Eliot manages to establish here at the beginning of the novel a satisfactory symbol of vanity which she employs throughout the novel. The ear-ring incident seems to be the climax of the sermon, but it is only the most powerful example of many. The entire sermon is used as the author's method of establishing immediately the set of values which she plans to employ in the story to follow. The success of this system almost leads the reader to suspect that the plot is only an elaboration of the abstract concepts set forth in this second chapter. That Eliot could fit this lengthy, but carefully constructed sermon so successfully into the novel seems all to her credit as a skillful craftsman.

# How to Teach Students to Read a Poem

DARREL ABEL

IN THIS paper "how to teach students to read a poem" means how to teach them to understand the poem as statement—not how to judge its truth, significance, or artistry, the latter being often attempted before the former has been accomplished.

Students have more difficulty reading poetry than prose simply because most of their reading has been prose, so that they are conditioned to expect prose characteristics in all compositions. The prose they are used to reading is more explicit than poetry commonly is; it offers generalizations and abstractions which the reader is called upon merely to comprehend and accept or reject as straightforward propositions: peacocks are vain birds; Caesar was ambitious; the order of nature is evidence of an intelligent Creator. But poetry commonly offers for consideration a set of facts or a carefully specified situation from which the reader must make inferences and, by taking note of their congruencies, discover in the set of facts the poet has offered the postulates of those facts or their inherent principle. An average student, scanning the poem for some explicit statement of its postulates or principle, may find such a statement or he may not. If he finds it, he is satisfied; if he fails to find it, he is exasperated and thinks that the poet has wilfully mystified him by withholding the coda. Longfellow and Edgar Guest are alike in their explicit statement of commonplaces, and are therefore popular with the common reader, who finds their statements "true" and intelligible—in fact, even "easy to read." In such statements as "We can make our lives sublime" and "It takes a heap o' livin' in a house t' make it home," they supply the expected prose gloss to their data.

Such prose-expectations of students

aware that poetry generally withholds explanations prompt the questions all English teachers get in their literature classes: What is the "hidden meaning" of this poem? Why doesn't the poet say "right out" what he "means"? How can you be sure the poet means what you say he means, and not just anything anyone happens to think of when he reads the poem? (A better form of this question is, What makes one interpretation of a poem better than others?) What makes you sure this poem really "means" anything—isn't it enough to read the poem just to get a feeling or impression? There is enough justice in some of these questions to embarrass the teacher, but I think they can all be dealt with to the enlightenment and satisfaction of most students if the teacher can manage an attentive cooperative reading of the poem in class. I will use the short poem which follows to illustrate what such a reading can bring out if the teacher directs his students with relevant and well-timed questions.

February

A few tossed thrushes save  
That carolled less than cried  
Against the dying rave  
And moan that never died,  
No bird sang then; no thorn,  
No tree was green beside  
Them only never shorn—  
The few by all the winds  
And chill mutations born  
Of Winter's many minds  
Abused and whipt in vain—  
Swarth yew and ivy kinds  
And iron breeds germane.

—RALPH HODGSON

(Quoted by permission of The Macmillan Co., from Hodgson's *Poems*, N.Y., 1917.)



This poem, although really simple, presents the two difficulties most students complain of: (1) the form of the statement is difficult—the sentence structure is abnormal, and many of the words are bizarre and not immediately intelligible; and (2) the poem offers a set of facts, but doesn't state explicitly why those facts are worth notice, nor what their significance is.

For this poem, and for poems of greater real difficulty, the first step in reading is to "straighten out" the poem into a succession of statements more like prose in sentence pattern and language, taking care that precisely the same facts are presented in the same order. The next step, drawing out the obvious and ultimately the less obvious or secondary implications from the facts given, with careful regard to their collocation, will be a more extended process. In my comments on the Hodgson poem, I will summarize the result of such a reading, presented with more organization than could ever be achieved in class.

Primary, specific statements of fact in the poem are agreed upon first. In order to establish these, students must be urged to a careful and (in view of their somewhat limited verbal resources and their general failure to understand allusions and figures) resourceful scrutiny of words and of the predications made by clauses. Tentative suggestion of meanings to be attributed to words and phrases usually prompts student questions which furnish the teacher opportunity to open up what students call the "hidden meaning" of the poem.

The first complete predication of the poem should be examined as if it were a prose statement to be put in plainer terms—both plainer words and a more normal sentence pattern. Written not in metrical lines, but as a sentence, the first predication reads: "A few tossed thrushes save that carolled less than cried against the dying rave and moan that never died, no bird sang then." Concerning this sentence, the following questions are likely to

be raised, in about this order: What does "tossed" mean in this context? What does "save" mean? What are the "dying rave and moan that never died"? If these questions are put together on the board to be considered for a moment, someone will offer the suggestion (no doubt along with others which, as competing ideas, will eventually be rejected) that in February, if thrushes are "tossed," it is likely that they are tossed by the wind—which would also account for "the dying rave and moan that never died," meaning the fitful violence and the steady moan of the wind. *Save* may lead to nothing but misplaced ingenuity in trying to fit ideas of rescue or thrift into the context, and probably the instructor will have to advance the suggestion that it is here used in its less usual acceptance of *except*. By this time, it is evident that the first predication, more plainly worded and in more normal order, might read something like this: No bird sang then (in February) except a few thrushes blown about by the wind, and they didn't so much "carol" as "cry against" the wind. In the course of this discussion of words, other questions will have been raised: Why weren't the thrushes caroling? And, anyway, why should they be? Once the wording of the equivalent statement has been agreed upon, it will be apparent that the weather explains why, of all birds, only the thrushes are audible, and why their songs are cries rather than carols: the harsh season had silenced, probably driven away, less hardy birds, and the thrushes' note responded to the season with appropriate stridency. The instructor should take opportunity to note that the word *tossed* is a concrete word that tells by implication as much as we can render in a phrase or clause, and should point out that probably exigencies of rhyme explain the use of *save* for *except*, and that rhyme and meter may have determined the inverted sentence order—but that, in any case, the inversion makes an emphatic periodic sentence.

The remainder of the poem will be

seen to consist of one statement which, after due scrutiny of its words, might be restated thus: There were no green trees or shrubs (in February) except the evergreens, which are never stripped of their foliage by the variable, severe weather—yews, ivies, and similar hardy species. Some discussion will be required to reach agreement about the meaning, in this context, of such words as "mutations," "swarth," "iron," "breeds," and "germane," but the ideas already established will direct the thinking of the class toward meanings consistent with the emerging principle of the poem, which can presently be formulated in the proposition that the severities of nature subdue or destroy all but the hardiest forms of organic life. It will be seen that the poet, by supplying two examples, has presented material from which a generalization can be induced—sufficiently convincing as illustration, if not fully adequate as a scientific induction.

Some students may formulate generalization on a higher level: Winter is a type of physical force in its most energetic operation. Thrushes and ivies are types of organic life, animal and vegetable, in extremely tenacious self-assertion (the thrushes' cries; the evergreens' leaves). There is everlasting physical assault upon organic life, but the strongest life endures. Integrity is superior to force.

The other questions listed early in this paper, in which the student often challenges an interpretation or imputes obscurity or fuzziness to the poet, will pretty much answer themselves in the course of such a reading. What is the "hidden meaning"? The student has discovered it. Why doesn't the poet "say right out what he means"? The student will usually agree that the poet's statement offers him an observation more significant and "real" by presenting the evidence which contains an implication than it would if it presented an explicit proposition but withheld the

evidence. How can you be sure that the poet means one thing and not anything at all or nothing at all? The student will usually be convinced that the poem has an ascertainable significance which (1) puts in order everything the poem contains, and (2) makes more sense than other interpretations would. He may acknowledge that a poem which looks obscure to readers with prose-expectations is often not so obscure as it appears to the casual reader; it is common to have the student sheepishly confess that he saw nothing in the poem at first, but that it now "makes sense."

After reading a poem, the teacher should call attention to whatever poetic qualities he supposes can be recognized in this particular poem by his class—for instance, in the Hodgson poem, the tightly elliptical structure of the poem, built upon examples and contrasts, might be remarked; also, the terse, concrete, connotative words used, words which justify their being somewhat unusually applied in some cases by their expressiveness.

Generalizing a bit more, the teacher might acknowledge that many poems really are irreducibly difficult and ambiguous; that the popular notion that it suffices to get some vague feeling or impression from a poem is clearly mistaken if there is actually a quite definite meaning in it which reasonably careful reading can discover; that there is no correlation between the goodness or badness of a poem and its obscurity or intelligibility.

I usually tell my students something that I believe to be true of any good poem, and helpful in understanding it—that it is essentially the working out of a kind of tension of ideas, and that once a reader grasps the poem's dynamic principle (e.g., nature vs. organic life in "February") the incidentals will probably be clear, if the reader is not too indolent or ignorant to find them.

# Joyce's "Clay": an Interpretation

WILLIAM T. NOON, S.J.

*Blessed are the peace-makers; they shall be counted the children of God.*

IN THE James Joyce Collection at the University of Buffalo Library there is a large notebook containing in Joyce's own hand further notes to his already published works. The new notes to "Clay," one of the shortest of the *Dubliners* stories, are cryptic:

Gentleman horse (stallion):  
*sie studiert immer etwas:*  
murders child.

Such jottings are mysterious enough to afford several slants of the critical glass in an effort to catch the meaning of "Clay." Since these late marginal comments are outside of the story's own texture, the interpreter can hope at best to accommodate them to the meaning which emerges, which "epiphanizes," in the story itself. I should like to accommodate them to my own view of "Clay" as a spiritually revitalized version of a Hallowe'en tale. (I am grateful to the University Librarian for permission to quote the phrases.)

All Hallows Eve, or Hallowe'en, has a spiritual core of meaning in Catholic countries like Ireland which has been almost altogether forgotten in our own secular observance of the holiday. Hallow Eve, or "Holy Eve," began not just as a holiday of false faces and funny pranks, but as the vigil of holy day, the feast of All the Saints. Once a year at the end of the Church's liturgical cycle in the autumn, this holy day is observed in honor of all the little men and women, the G.I. Joes and Janes of the spiritual warfare, the unsung heroes, the "saints" (with a small *s*) who may not have done anything particularly memorable or striking by way of exploit, but who in the ordinary, everyday routine business of living showed

holiness, saved their souls. This "feast" has always been a favorite with the vast rank and file of the faithful. It has been regarded in a very special way as their particular holy day. In a Catholic country like Ireland the evening before the holy day came to be celebrated with games and harmless pranks from which our Hallowe'en customs are derived.

Joyce's story "Clay" unfolds against this All Hallows background. Joyce takes advantage of the original meaning of All Hallows Eve to introduce us to a modern work-a-day saint, a saint with the small *s* indeed, somewhat vain and somewhat foolish, whose proudest moment of grace "epiphanizes" in the wordless, brave acceptance of herself as others see her—so much shapeless, loveless clay.

The plot-line of Joyce's story is simple. Maria, employee of a laundry (at Ballsbridge, the site of the annual Horse Show in Dublin), goes on Hallow Eve to the family of one of the Donnelly boys for whom she had been a childhood nurse. En route she purchases some cookies and a plumcake for the Hallowe'en party which Joe Donnelly and his wife have arranged for their own and a neighbor's children. On the tram a stout, elderly "gentleman," somewhat intoxicated, makes room for Maria, and they chat together. Arriving at the Donnelly home Maria is disconcerted when she cannot find her plumcake surprise. In the course of the evening's games the children trick Maria, who is blindfolded, into choosing, instead of the ring (prophetic of marriage) which she had hoped for, a wet lump of clay (prophetic of death). Joe scolds the children and he and his wife arrange that on the next try Maria will choose the prayer-book (prophetic, so they say, of Maria's entering a convent). The party closes with Maria's singing, at Joe's and his wife's insist-

ence, two stanzas from one of "the old songs" of Balfe. Only, Maria omits the second stanza and sings the first stanza twice.

The plot-line of the story gives little idea, however, of how Joyce manages his "epiphany" of Maria as a kind of average saint, aware and unaware of the humility in self-knowledge which existence and sanctity require. Quietly, in a seemingly casual, unpremeditated way, Joyce prepares us for this understanding of Maria in the very opening of the story. The incident of Maria's settling the quarrels of the work-house laundry women has its point in the matron's words: "Maria, you are a veritable peace-maker." Though Joyce's overt allusion is to but one of the Beatitudes, covertly he manages to suggest, after a fashion, all the Beatitudes. "Blessed are you who are poor; the Kingdom of God is yours": in Maria's purse, we are told, there "were but two half-crowns and some coppers." Also, Maria is patient ("Blessed are the sad of heart") when she suspects that her cakes have been stolen by the children (as possibly they were), when the nut-cracker is misplaced by the children (most likely, deliberately) so that she cannot eat any of the nuts. In a subtle way Maria "suffers persecutions" and yet tries to appear "glad and light-hearted."

The lyric-like ambiguity of the story, however, comes from Joyce's focus on Maria as a woman as well as a saint. For all her beautiful moral traits, on which she somewhat prided herself, Maria was not physically attractive. When she laughed, for instance, the tip of her very long nose nearly met the tip of her very long chin. The poor drudges of the laundry loved Maria anyway for her gentle character. Joe Donnelly and his wife were old enough, had lived long enough to take Maria for granted. But children were instinctively "put off" by her physical ugliness. And there had never been any "beaux" for Maria; no "suitors sought her hand, no knights upon bended knee."

This, Joyce implies, was a great sorrow. For Maria at heart thought of herself as a great lady. *Sie studiert immer etwas*: Maria was always "studying something." She had a knack of fitting whatever harsh thing might happen into her dream. "All that is lovely, all that is gracious in the telling"—all this truly was the argument of Maria's thought. Maria knew that she was a lady, not like Ginger Mooney, "a common woman." Since she was a lady, Maria thought she could tell a gentleman when she saw one. After talking with the "colonel-looking gentleman" on the tram, she thought: "How easy it was to know a gentleman even when he has a drop taken." Maria was ever ready to make excuses. Maria was sometimes wrong. The gentleman of whom she had such a high opinion was in some respects, had she known them, hardly more than a stallion, a gentleman horse.

A lovely person like Maria should have been married, should have had a chance to know the love of a husband and children of her own, children who would have cared for her too much to have wanted to play tricks on her. It is only when we come to reflect on Maria's "mistake" at the end of the story that we realize how much the lack of love in her life had hurt Maria, how much it had cost her.

Joyce manages numerous details of the story in illumination of Maria's "mistake" at its close. The laundry-women laugh and jest about the ring in the barmbrack which they truly wish Maria to have. Maria seemingly regards the jest as light-heartedly as they do. Actually she has to try to convince herself "how much better it was to be independent and have your own money in your pocket." The stylish clerk's ironical question at the cake-shop, "was it wedding-cake she wanted to buy," made Maria blush. The cruelty of the children's jest in offering her a saucer filled with moist clay from the garden is seemingly not registered by Maria, only because the illumination is all within. The child who is "murdered" in the story is

not any one of the children at the party. The child is inside Maria. In a flash the lady Maria sees herself as ridiculous and rather ugly. In that flash she loses hold on her dream.

The crucial test of Maria's gentle character comes to focus a little while later in her singing of Balfe's romantic love-song from *The Bohemian Girl*, "I Dreamt I Dwelt in Marble Halls." What an ironic contrast there is between Maria's actual situation and the words of the lyric as she sings them in her "tiny, quavering voice." There had been a time when Maria might have imagined that these words of the first stanza could conceivably come true in some sense for her. She was the hope and the pride of the laundry-folk, was she not? It was not altogether incongruous to *dream* that she could be rich, could have a high name. In spite of everything, she had once believed, or at least wanted to believe that people were good like herself—so that they would continue to love her *for what she was*, even if she were "to dwell in marble halls."

But Maria herself saw the incongruity of singing the second stanza of the lyric, hard as she had once tried to believe that people loved her just for what she was, and so she omitted:

I dreamt that suitors sought my hand,  
That knights upon bended knee,

And with vows no maiden heart could  
withstand

They pledged their faith to me.  
And I dreamt that one of that noble band  
Came forth my hand to claim.  
But I also dreamt, which pleased me most,  
That you loved me still the same.

Life had finally taught Maria the sheer impossibility of a dream like that ever coming true for her. Now after the games of the evening it would not be wise to expose herself to ridicule by singing this second verse. So, Joyce tells us, she sang the first verse twice. Joyce adds, "No one tried to show her her mistake!" Maria's goodness was not always able to restore peace: she had not succeeded that evening in making Joe any better disposed toward his estranged brother Alph. But on this All Hallows Eve, she had succeeded in something. Her goodness was stronger than the children's hardness, their lack of understanding: "No one tried to show her her mistake!" Her goodness was strong enough to trouble their parents' casual acceptance: Joe had to ask for the corkscrew. Life had been hard to Maria, but Maria had not become hard. Was Maria's singing the same stanza twice a mistake? Is living the life of the Beautitudes a mistake? Is it a mistake to be hallow on All Hallows Eve?

### Clay

Ordinary saints grow faint to posterity; whilst quite ordinary sinners pass vividly down the ages.

—SIR MAX BEERBOHM, *Zuleika Dobson*



# On Oversimplifying Antony

DAVID S. BERKELEY

CRITICISM has failed to appreciate the subtlety of Shakespeare's *Antony and Cleopatra*, traditionally read as a tragedy of love in which Antony, at the point of death, "thinks, to be sure, of the poor last kiss he gives her, but much more of her safety in a world shorn of his protective power" (O. J. Campbell). So E. E. Stoll: "... the words of Antony and Cleopatra at his death are among the immortal utterances of sexual tenderness"; A. C. Bradley: "... when, in his last agony, he calls for wine that he may gain a moment's strength to speak, it is to advise her for the days to come"; Hazelton Spencer: "He dies for love. . . . In the end Antony is wholly hers"; Granville-Barker: "... his thoughts [at his death] are for her safety and peace of mind."<sup>1</sup> But Antony's last helpful word to Cleopatra—"None about Caesar trust but Proculeius"—would lead Cleopatra to the fate her soul abhors, *prima donna* in Caesar's Roman triumph. Antony's motivation at this point has not to my knowledge been thoroughly explored, and the result is two Antonys—the Antony of Shakespeare, double-minded if not infinitely various, and the Antony of Shakespearean criticism, who gives all for love. The facts of the play do not permit us with assurance to label the expiring Antony as the misjudging lover of Cleopatra or as the disingenuous, would-be avenger, for they point in both directions, more insistently in my opinion toward the cynical view of Antony's character. But a wise ignorance

is the best view of the matter. With opposite readings of Antony, the play takes on more shadowy outlines and becomes a richer, more subtle, more dramatic, and more human drama worthy of more critical esteem than it has generally won.

In one of his last scenes Antony knows—or speaks as if he knows—that Caesar intends the exhibition of Cleopatra in Rome. In IV. xii, after defeat, he shouts at her: "Vanish, or I shall give thee thy deserving / And blemish Caesar's triumph. Let him take thee, / And hoist thee up to the shouting plebeians." This reading of Caesar makes a lasting impression on Cleopatra. In Antony's death scene she expresses her fear of a triumph, using this reason for momentary delay in admitting him to her monument:

I dare not, dear,

Dear my lord, pardon, I dare not  
Lest I be taken. Not the imperious show  
Of the full-fortuned Caesar ever shall  
Be broached with me. If knife, drugs, ser-  
pents, have  
Edge, sting, or operation, I am safe.  
Your wife Octavia, with her modest eyes  
And still conclusion, shall acquire no honour  
Demuring upon me.

A moment later Antony urges Cleopatra, "Of Caesar seek your honour, with your safety." What does this speech mean? Does it mean that Antony has forgotten his reading of Caesar in IV. xii and Cleopatra's reminder in the present scene? This interpretation is incredible. Does Antony know that Caesar intends the disgrace of Cleopatra and advise her to apply to him merely to hear her answer correctly? This interpretation hardly seems necessary in view of Cleopatra's statement, a few lines before, preferring suicide to "the imperious show of the full-fortuned Caesar." Does Antony know

<sup>1</sup> Campbell, ed. *The Living Shakespeare* (1949), p. 981; Stoll, *MLR*, 23 (1928), 161; Bradley, *Oxford Lectures on Poetry* (1934), pp. 297-298; Spencer, *The Art and Life of William Shakespeare* (1940), p. 344; Granville-Barker, *Prefaces to Shakespeare* (1946), I, 434-435.

Caesar's intentions with respect to Cleopatra but counsel her against his better judgment to seek safety with honor from the young Roman boy? This interpretation may well be correct: Antony is notable for failure to apply his knowledge. His soldiers, for example, advise him not to trust to ships in fighting Octavius, but against his better judgment he sets himself to fight by sea. In counseling Cleopatra to apply to Caesar, Antony may be indulging some of the same recklessness, though with perfectly good intentions toward Cleopatra. Another interpretation is that Antony, knowing that Caesar intends Cleopatra's disgrace, advises her to apply to Caesar in the hope of bringing her low for causing his defeat. If this is Antony's aim, his commendation of Caesar to Cleopatra seems remarkably brazen or extraordinarily stupid. Antony himself has told her what to expect of Octavius, and in the present scene she demonstrates how well she knows her lesson. What can be shown in Antony's death scene is that he has reason to associate Caesar with impending ignominy for Cleopatra.

In the next speech Antony advises Cleopatra to trust none about Caesar but Proculeius. There are reasons leading one to think that in saying this, Antony knows Proculeius to be Caesar's right-hand man. One may argue, of course, that Antony ignorantly recommends Proculeius as the queen's support. But for Antony ignorantly to single out a member of Caesar's court and to commend him as the only trustworthy man in Caesar's entourage projects an Antony so unknowledgeable concerning men and affairs that one cannot easily imagine how he forged ahead in spheres military and political. Antony's errors are errors of judgment acting upon reasonably full information, not errors based on ignorance. In challenging Octavius to a duel, for example, Antony knows from Caesar's behavior at Philippi—he is, in fact, our source for the point—that gallantry is not one of Caesar's shin-

ing qualities. His challenge, then, represents, as Enobarbus suggests, the triumph of will over judgment. This general consideration points toward Antony's knowledge of Proculeius' devotion to Caesar.

A collateral matter may well be aired here. Sir William Smith, in his *Dictionary of Greek and Roman Biography and Mythology*, says that "the great intimacy of Proculeius with Augustus is attested by many writers. . . . Dion Cassius . . . speaks of him and Maecenas as the principal friends of the emperor." Before Antony's death scene there is, to be sure, no direct evidence that Antony knows Proculeius as a friend, as well as a retainer, of Caesar's. But a historical character carries the associations and traditions of history into a play where he appears unless the author makes a point of subverting or improving history. Since Shakespeare is far from attempting to rewrite North, one may think it probable that Antony is aware of the friendship between Caesar and Proculeius. Again two interpretations suggest themselves. Antony knows that Proculeius is devoted to Caesar and will turn Cleopatra over to his master for purposes of exhibition, but contrary to his knowledge of what may be expected, he advises Cleopatra to trust none in Caesar's court but Proculeius. Thus his love for Cleopatra persists until his death. On the other hand, Antony may here be consciously signing Cleopatra's warrant for disgrace and death. What is probable at this point is that Antony knows Proculeius' personal attachment to Caesar, whatever use his judgment may make of this fact.

There are reasons in Antony's character for his using this information to deliver Cleopatra into Caesar's hands. In *Julius Caesar* and *Antony and Cleopatra* he is wont to "double-cross" suspecting and unsuspecting friends and acquaintances. He is experienced and adept in treachery. One recalls that in *Julius Caesar* his professions to the conspirators jar notably with his actual intentions. The funeral oration

itself is a masterpiece of treachery. In *Antony and Cleopatra* he has deserted his wife Fulvia and later, in spite of his profession to deal squarely, the unhappy Octavia. His professions to Octavius are also at variance with his intentions. Even Julius Caesar may be considered a victim of Antony's treachery if the following lines of Enobarbus are truthful—and we have no reason for disbelieving Enobarbus:

*Agrippa.* [Aside to *Eno.*] Why, Enobarbus, When Antony found Julius Caesar dead, He cried almost to roaring, and he wept When at Philippi he found Brutus slain.  
*Eno.* [Aside to *Agr.*] That year indeed he was troubled with a rheum.

What willingly he did confound he wailed. Antony is here described as "willingly confounding" Julius Caesar. Further though less solid evidence in this direction may be found in Antony's advice to the immortal Julius to free himself from fear of Cassius. One is here obliged to assume (and for me the assumption is not difficult) that this bit of advice is based upon a knowledge of Cassius' character and designs. The speech "None about Caesar trust but Proculeius" is thus parallel in succinct, offhand treachery to the lines in *Julius Caesar* when Antony says of Cassius:

Fear him not, Caesar. He's not dangerous. He is a noble Roman, and well given.

The speeches are parallel in yet another way: in *Julius Caesar*, Anthony does not explain why he regards Cassius as "well given" toward Caesar, and in *Antony and Cleopatra* he does not explain why he thinks that Cleopatra may trust Proculeius. One notes in all these genuine and suspected instances of treachery that Antony betrays for distinct advantage; it is not madcap treachery, even in the later play, a purposeless treachery done by a man whose will overpowers his judgment. If Antony has been abusive of confidence before his death scene, and if he sees advantage in treachery, one may reasonably expect to find yet another example just

before his death. Cleopatra's lie about her death he knows; her collusion with Caesar he strongly suspects; and in his last scene, with death enclosing him, he has opportunity to even the score by commending her to the sympathetic care of Proculeius.

There is reason in Antony's motivation for his taking revenge ("a sort of wild justice") upon Cleopatra. As his fortunes decline, he tends to blame Cleopatra. Immediately after his first naval reverse he expresses his disappointment to Cleopatra, asking whither she leads him. After the exit of Thyreus, Caesar's ambassador, in III. xiii, he derides her lechery and strongly suggests that her loyalty to him is suspect. By IV. xii he is certain that "this foul Egyptian" has betrayed him. He determines upon her death: "For when I am revenged upon my charm, / I have done all." And later: "The witch shall die. / To the young Roman boy she hath sold me, and I fall / Under this plot; she dies for't." Now Antony, so far as we know, has no solid evidence at any time of Cleopatra's collusion with Caesar. But he has of course some thoughts from Enobarbus (delivered offstage) touching Cleopatra's conduct with Caesar's ambassador. He knows her history. He is persuaded that a plot against him exists between Cleopatra and Caesar. In this frame of mind he deals himself a fatal blow between hearing that she has killed herself and hearing later that she is still living. It is highly unnatural, I submit, for Antony in his last scene, having summoned death on the impetus of Cleopatra's lie, to refrain from expressing himself on the subject of Cleopatra's alliance with Caesar. There she stands, an obvious liar, healthy and fit for business; here he lies, awaiting importunate death. Then come the enigmatic words: "None about Caesar trust but Proculeius."

At this point critics view the dying Antony through the lens of a hundred fifth-act *précieuse* conversions. Thus Holzknecht and McClure: "Knowing that she has destroyed him, knowing all her

faults and her final deceit in sending him word of her death, he has for her nothing of blame or reproach, nothing but tenderness and unselfish thought for her future" (*Selected Plays of Shakespeare*, 1937, II, 527). If Antony's last scene exhibits nothing of the mud in his nature, nothing of his vow that "The witch shall die," nothing of his consciousness of Cleopatra's plot against him, nothing of his bent toward treachery, nothing even of rudimentary justice, we have here—let us recognize it—a transfigured Antony, an angelic Antony, and an unnatural Antony. So it may be.

restitit Aeneas claraque in luce refulsit  
os umerosque deo similis; namque ipsa  
decoram  
caesariem nato genetrix lumenque iuventae  
purpureum et laetos oculis adflarat honores.

But an opposite reading is possible. All of Antony's suspicions of Cleopatra's loyalty from III. xiii on, his threats and vows against her life, prepare the reader to interpret the line as Antony's offhand way of delivering Cleopatra into Caesar's hands. The line is short: time and energy permit no attempt to bear down Cleopatra's objections. The speech is superficially innocuous; more, it is outwardly the culmination of Antony's love for Cleopatra. The speech is pregnant with the ambiguity of the greatest dramatic art, and its fullest meaning may well escape Cleopatra as it does the reader.

Cleopatra, to be sure, receives Antony's advice coolly, but her behavior in Act V shows that she is willing to test her lord's dying words. In V. i Caesar tells Proculeius that he means to lead Cleopatra in triumph, and charges him to forestall her attempts at suicide. When introduced to Proculeius, she recalls Antony's words in a tone intimating her opinion that they are fraudulent: "Antony / Did tell me of you, bade me trust you, but / I do not greatly care to be deceived / That have no use for trusting." Proculeius talks soothingly to the effect that Caesar will treat her with mercy if she will only ask

him. Now Cleopatra, unable to appraise this advice, resolves to stab herself, or—what is more probable—resolves to test Proculeius' reaction to her suicide. Her fears are confirmed: he quickly disarms her. Then in a passionate speech she declares that she would rather die abjectly in an Egyptian ditch than walk at the tail of Caesar's chariot in Rome. Proculeius replies: "You do extend / These thoughts of horror further than you shall / Find cause in Caesar." When this interview is terminated, Cleopatra discovers that the Romans do not want her immediate death; but she is not yet sure why she is being spared. She has of course strong suspicions that she is being saved to grace a triumphal procession, but at this point she cannot be certain: Antony has bidden her apply to Caesar and trust Proculeius, and Proculeius has not revealed the best part of his hand.

Then follows a strange colloquy with Dolabella—Cleopatra's last conquest—who asserts positively that Caesar will lead her in triumph. She believes in Dolabella. From this point her great desire is to end herself suitably, and much dramatic interest hereafter is derived from her wiles that induce Caesar to imagine that she would rather live than die. All this, of course, is something else. I wish to observe that at the end of the interview with Dolabella, Cleopatra has tested, as best she could, both of Antony's advices. The advice to apply to Caesar will procure only disgrace. The advice to trust Proculeius above any man about Caesar is shown to be less than trustworthy. In brief, Cleopatra's suspicions, evident at the receipt of Antony's counsel, are weighed and confirmed. She, like the reader, is confronted with two choices: either Antony's brain has softened or his heart has hardened. What her opinion of her lover is at this point and hereafter one cannot say: she has no soliloquies, she must by the compulsion of her nature always appear triumphant, she is "infinitely various," she is a great actress, and "Husband, I come" may or may not be histrionic. Who knows?

# English and the Liberal Arts Tradition

DONALD J. LLOYD

THE TRADITION of the liberal arts, as I understand it, is a faith that has come down to us from medieval times, somewhat disheveled and a little battered, but still viable enough to let us talk about it today. It is the belief that by exercising the minds of young people on hard intellectual matter, we increase their store of knowledge and their ability to bring that knowledge to bear—that is, we teach them to think. The specific matter of the liberal arts has changed from time to time, but the faith has persisted, and in our day it is pinned on the cluster of arts and sciences to be found in the catalog of any liberal arts college: the fine arts, history and philosophy, the biological, physical, and social sciences, and the study of literature and language. The liberal arts tradition holds that learning is a coming to know, and that knowing is its end as an act of power. It is to be distinguished from modern educational theory by its grounding in subject-matter. It is to be distinguished from so-called “general education” in accepting the subject matter as a discipline, not as a pre-professional blueplate of cultural fact, pre-mixed, pre-integrated, pre-packaged, and even pre-digested, to be swallowed and regurgitated on demand. The liberal arts presume and demand literacy, not only in English, but in the other languages, living and dead, which embody the literatures and other accumulated records of our civilization.

I take the tradition of the liberal arts to be a living tradition, and I take the study of the English language and literature to be its living center. If we falter in our work, it falters; if we thrive, it thrives. For we have in our charge not only the corpus of English literature—a large slice of the tradition, as you can tell by the necessary investment in books—but literacy itself, the command of English

writing. And among the teachers of English, the college and university departments of English are in their way central, for they determine the quality of the training in English of all the teachers of English. For seven college years, five, four, or one, the English teacher gets his discipline in the English language and literature from us, and what we do not give him he does not get. It is important that we see ourselves largely, not merely as possessors of the tradition, but as its guardians and its transmitters. Thus when we hear of the decline of the liberal arts in prestige and meaning, their exclusion from the world of business, industry, and government, their retreat in the universities before vocational and professional specialism, their assassination by catchword in the primary and secondary schools, we can trace the responsibility step by relentless step to ourselves, the college teachers of English. And if we look to a justification and revivification in public and private life, in the schools and in the marketplace, of the liberal arts tradition, we may properly look to ourselves to begin it.

In a sense, in this most literate of nations, in this ink-and-paper-consuming gargantua, we may credit ourselves with some successes. There is no doubt that the American people are the efficient managers of an industrial system whose lifeblood is paperwork. We know that for the smallest intricate part in the simplest machine there is a batch of paper distributed somewhere in files, and for the majestic bombers that guard our skies there are whole volumes of technical manuals that may have to be read by flashlight on a desert tract where an error means the crash of a million-dollar investment. From the housewife with her cookbook and the auto mechanic with his parts catalog, to the top-level executive with his digests



of digests of subsidiary reports, we read and write what we have to in order to do our work. We read the newspapers and an outpouring of periodical literature that includes comic books, weekly, monthly, quarterly, and annual publications of every serviceable kind. We read "how to do it" books and we do it, with one hand holding our place and the other running a power tool. We have some evidence that the mass of youngsters read and write at least as well as those few who were graduated from the wonderful, wonderful schools of fifty years ago, when pupils were geniuses and teachers were giants.

But this kind of literacy, important as it is, is not the kind which is closest to our hearts as lovers and cultivators of literature, not the kind we would like to make our gift to the nation. By all accounts most Americans read what they have to and then put the book down, or turn to some trivia; they take one look at the kind of literature we care about and head out for the ball game. In book purchases, in numbers of bookstores, and of libraries, and in the use of those libraries, we compare badly with other western nations. In the development of the kind of literacy, the kind of love of significant reading in which we could take some pride, we find little to give us satisfaction.

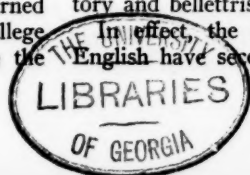
Furthermore, the future dares us even more than the past. We all know the story of the birth-rate; we know that a tide of children is surging into the lower grades. We can see that tide pressing on through the high schools and into college. They will need teachers, and we know that teachers will be found for them. But what kind of teachers, and where will they come from? There has been for some years an ebbing away from the study of English, so that our majors are fewer in number and in proportion than in the past. We can be sure that most teachers of high school English in the future will go to their work with what they have learned from us in the first year or two of college and no more. They will determine the

quality and interests of college students for a long time to come.

In this situation, any department without entrenchment in graduate teaching can appraise some of the illiberalities that have crept into this citadel of the liberal arts. One of these is the invasion of the specialist spirit. In our discipline there are no special niches; our field is the mind and heart of mankind. Our function is two-fold, to add to knowledge and to disseminate it; we perform in the study and in the classroom. We do not fulfill our function by teaching courses that are not taken and by writing books that cannot be read. In the sapping-away of a broad and liberal concept of learning, we tend to equate scholarship with research, and to elevate the most pedestrian pursuit of fact, however inconsequential, however special in nature, above all other materializations of the spirit of scholarship. We ought not let ourselves become colonies of moles, more vocational than the vocationalists, incomprehensible each to the other, let alone to the outside world. Let us bear in mind that the scholarly impulse may express itself nobly in the mastery and appraisal and wide-ranging pursuit of value in what is already held to be known, in the philosophical crossing of departmental and disciplinary boundaries, and that this is the essential scholarship of the teacher.

We teachers of English should draw a moral from the plight of Latin and Greek. We may feel that the Classics departments brought it on themselves, by their concentration on language and their myopic exclusion of the values of classical literature. But we acquiesced in their downfall, and the present place of English in the liberal arts shows how we profited by it. We seem to be digging our own graves, but we do not repeat their error. We reverse it. As the classics disappeared into the open mouth of grammar, so we prepare to plunge into the jaws of literary history and belletristic criticism.

In effect, the college departments of English have seceded from the study of



language, beginning with a shift of interest among the language scholars from the permanent written text to the perishable sounds of speech. Philology, like Latin, buried itself in particularities of detail, and a generation of great philologists who were also great students of literature did not reproduce itself. As philology grew special, there was a burst of interest in literary history and a strong but lesser interest in literary criticism. These two ate up the English departments at the expense of philology, and the study of the English language as an equal and contributing partner in our discipline has about vanished. Meanwhile the newer linguists are sequestered among the anthropologists, themselves a wandering tribe whom the sociologists have taken in, where they become more and more technicians divorced from literary interests. I submit that the structural study of English, which has much light to throw on historical and critical problems, and alone can expose the mechanisms by which we speak and write, belongs in the department of English. Each graduate student has a right to a thorough knowledge of the development of his language in time, and of its present structure. We rightly press our students to acquaint themselves with the more popular sciences; we should do more than press them to master linguistics; we should take it into the department and give it to them.

The concentration of the English graduate and undergraduate major on literary history and literary criticism has had still another effect, and that is the rejection of the freshman and sophomore courses as an area of professional concern. These courses are actually the showcase of the department where it should be displaying its best wares. They are the sources of its majors, and for some time to come they will be the last and only courses in English that most of the actual teachers of English in the primary and secondary schools will get. I submit that they should be genuine courses in the English language

and literature, with English and not a hodgepodge of other matters as their subject, and that we should channel into them a thorough descriptive treatment of Modern English according to our best scholarly knowledge. I submit further that they should not be staffed by graduate students, beginning instructors, and a hodgepodge of others scraped up at the last minute, but by responsible professional people who would give the same scholarly attention to the problems of composition that we commonly give to our literary and critical research, and who would receive professional rewards for accomplishment—that is, equivalent salary and rank. I like to see beginners start at the bottom—as administrators, say. If they do well, promote them to the faculty; then if they do well in upper division courses, promote them to composition. We should set ourselves in the English department to breed teachers, not college presidents and deans.

For we have not only rejected the general college student, but we have rejected the marketplace; we have favored people who will become replicas of ourselves. (And it is true, on the other hand, that business and industry have failed to sell themselves to liberal arts graduates as satisfying arenas for ethical, responsible careers, so that some of our young men and women have gone into teaching, government, social service, or other non-business enterprises, where they feel that their souls are reasonably untortured by their daily work and associations.) But we in English have seen ourselves too narrowly, have failed to transmit our values beyond these few, to establish what we do as worthy of all men's interest. And we have not noted how many of our graduates actually do end up in business, and have had to be told by representatives from industry how valuable English and the liberal arts actually have become in modern enterprise. We have missed out on many career-minded students who would like to be civilized, but who take a technical or vocational training because, as they

say, they have to eat, and neither we nor they have known that the changing climate of business has made a rewarding place for the liberal-arts graduate.

There are other rejections which render English departments ineffective, but the last that I want to take up is the rejection of pedagogy. The advancement and dissemination of knowledge are two parts of the university's function, as they are two aspects of the function of every college teacher. In the liberal arts tradition, pedagogy derives from knowledge; the teacher is not a methodist, but a person whose way of teaching rises naturally from a searching appraisal of himself and his subject, his teachers and his students. When the colleges of education took teaching as their province, I think they never dreamed that the subject-matter departments would abandon the ground to them and take their dolls and go home. Yet, though English departments assume that most of their graduates will be teachers, they generally offer no guidance in teaching, but boot the novice into class and shut the door on him. Now in the tradition of the liberal arts, teaching is a kind of honorable succession, and you do not teach the subject without teaching the teaching of it. We do not have to fall victim to the siren notion that a course in methods of teaching English will do the job. We ought to have clearly in mind every day that every class has people in it who will be teachers and are in a sense already apprenticed. We ought to explain what we do and why we do it, and we ought to give sufficient scholarly attention to this aspect of our work so that we know what we do and why.

As things stand now, we have abandoned the teachers of English in the lower schools to the colleges of education, and these colleges have done their best for them. But the problems of teaching English rise from the nature of the language and of its writing system. An educationist caught in the traditional mythology of

grammar can no more devise effective teaching methods than any person snatched from the passing crowd. What you think the language is and how you think it works determines how you teach it, and the educationist, like everybody else, knows no more of the language than we ourselves have taught him. Nor can the linguist devise effective methods of teaching English; that is not his business. It is *our* business, to be carried on by English teachers within the department of English. It is our business, as literary scholars, to go to the linguists and the sociologists and the anthropologist and psychologist and educationist, and winnow their findings for what seems relevant and fruitful in the teaching of English. Enunciating a theory is far from giving it flesh in the classroom, but at least a theory based on ascertained fact would be of more use to the teachers in the schools than the vacuum of critical carping with which we now observe their work.

As I understand the tradition of the liberal arts, it is the approach through knowledge to intellectual power. It is, indeed, a kind of learning by doing; we do not believe that memorizing a list of the latest findings in a field constitutes a mastery of the field. We are not so fatuous as to think that exercising the mental muscles on any kind of hard matter will produce a brain that can be turned loose like Univac on any other matter and come up with the answers. But we do believe that under the apparent randomness of human life and human societies lie systems of order, and that the study of these systems leads to a disciplined mind—the study of science under scientists, history under historians, literature under sensitive readers and careful writers, philosophy under philosophers, and language under linguists. The study of order is the study of things in relation to each other. You can tackle it narrowly, within a limited field, or broadly wherever it appears. The more broadly you work, the more likenesses you see. If you are in-

formed on many matters, you move more easily to a grasp of some new one; you swamp it. The more narrowly you work, the more painfully you move from point to point. We believe that if a man has ranged widely in the thought of other men, meditated deeply, cared much, written and spoken carefully as a matter of habitual need to state himself honestly, he can face the changing world unalarmed and be equal to it.

The contribution of English to a liberal arts education is of course literature, but before literature—before, indeed, any of the liberal arts—comes literacy. You have to walk before you can run; and even Pegasus must take a few steps on the ground before his pinions grip the air. Literacy is basically a simple matter; twenty-six letters and a dozen punctuation marks compose word and sentence signs that represent our speech. But because we have jumped too quickly in our teaching to decorum in place of command, to respectability in place of creativity, we have never brought the great mass of youngsters to the sure, spontaneous grasp of our writing system that sets them free to use it. It is not unintelligence that curtains most students off from the liberal arts; on the one hand, many dull people take great delight in these disciplines, and on the other, many gifted students show their worst efforts in English. It is the inefficiency in turning speech into writing and writing into speech that forms the curtain; and to turn this inefficiency into efficiency ought to be our first order of business.

The will to produce literacy at whatever cost must find an honored place in college and university departments of English.

We must discover and teach in the freshman courses the trigger mechanisms of language, the working of language in society, the nature of language habits and their development in the growing human being, and the precise relationship of speech to writing. On this knowledge we must build fruitful practice in the manipulation of the signs. Two parallel systems, both rooted in our history, both in flux—the sounds that die on the air and the words that live on paper—must be approached creatively and imaginatively, with the full apparatus of scholarship broadly conceived, a scholarship that leads us to the facts wherever they are hidden.

As long as we hold our grip on most college students for the first year or two, we have the power, whether we use it or not, of giving most educated people a key to the liberal arts. We have a showcase. As long as we know that most future teachers of English are not majoring in English—and this will be true for a long time to come—we ought to pack the freshman and sophomore years with as much knowledge of language and as much enjoyment and understanding of literature as we can cram into them. It is no secret that science and technology are drawing students away from us into what surely is premature specialization, and it is no mystery how they do it. They give the best efforts of their best minds to the introductory courses; they practice the hard sell. If we consider the liberal arts worthy not of merely defending but of extending, then we must give our best efforts and our best minds to our introductory courses, and sell like hell. Then we can make English the real matrix of literacy and nurse of the liberal arts.

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### Memorandum

Professor Lloyd delivered a version of the above essay at the 1954 NCTE Convention in Detroit. Hear Norman Cousins, Malcolm Cowley, Archibald Macleish, Clifton Fadiman, Marchette Chute, and Morris Bishop at the 1955 meeting in New York in November.

# Round Table

## Lecture vs. Discussion

*Note:* In May 1953 the Editors asked readers a half-dozen questions about teaching techniques. One of them—"When should the teacher of literature lecture? When allow or provoke discussion?"—brought the responses printed below, which generally find discussion the superior method of learning, with lectures occasionally necessary. Interested readers (and who is not?) should follow this symposium with a

lengthier one presented in the October 1954 *Journal of General Education*, especially the philosophical analysis and rationale of the discussion method drawn up by Justus Buchler. Further ammunition for those who favor this method is provided by B. S. Bloom in an article in the April 1953 *JGE*, which masses shocking facts about exactly what is going on in students' minds while you are lecturing to them.

### LECTURE FOR BACKGROUND ONLY

There are two extremes to the range of methods employed in teaching literature courses: the lecture method used in large classes in which the instructor lectures for the entire class period; and the discussion method used generally in small groups. In recent years enthusiasm for "discussion groups" has thrown lecture courses into disfavor. Concerned that the creativeness and self-expression of students not be stifled, instructors have plumped for courses similar to the Great Books discussion groups which they conduct apparently on the principle that by scrambling empty egg shells one can produce yolks. Some instructors use the "pulling by the roots" technique of letting students fumble through to a self-realization of the gist of the text, generally to the sheer frustration of the majority of the members of the class. I do not see how a literary text can be understood other than superficially when read in a vacuum. What can an unprepared student make of Stendhal's *The Red and the Black*? He is going to grasp only the surface action of the plot until he knows something about the history of France from 1800 to 1830, the political, social, and religious controversies which motivated the basic situations, attitudes, and themes in the book. He needs to know something about Stendhal as a personality and about his aesthetic point-of-view and technique. Some works can profitably be read as if they were contemporary with the student,

some as if they were dangling in space; but generally the most meaningful reading will result from relating the text to the author and to the age in which it was produced.

Of the two extremes the lecture method is the lesser of two evils; it can be much more rewarding in conservation of time, in contribution of information, and in stimulation. All of us can remember inspiring, provocative lecturers from our undergraduate days. There are, to be sure, many dull and unprofitable lecturers; but they are less deadly and more easily recognized than inadequate discussion leaders. Great skill is required to lead successfully a discussion group. How many colleges can afford to staff and to keep the size of classes down to a number compatible with discussion techniques? And anyone who has ever tried to conduct a seminar with thirty or more students knows the difficulty. Some colleges having large enrollments in literature classes have effectively compromised by alternating lecture sessions with small discussion groups. The size of enrollment in any literature course determines more or less the method and techniques of classroom procedure.

The ideal way to handle a literature course is to combine the two methods in individual classes of manageable size. In introductory lectures and informally as needed throughout discussion periods, the instructor supplies adequate background for



a clear, meaningful interpretation of the text. Historical, religious, social, economic, aesthetic, technical, or biographical information necessary for an intelligent reading of the work is quickly and efficiently supplied to students so that they can get on with their own creative reading. The amount of information needed will vary depending upon the text and the group of students. When discussion periods reveal serious omissions in student backgrounds, as they often do, the instructor may break into the discussion to "lecture" for a while. Ordinarily such lectures will provide the materials necessary for interpretation, but will not dictate or "hand out" interpretations. Sometimes, however, the instructor

may find it profitable in stimulating student perception and imagination to give suggestive interpretations or to discuss his own personal interpretations and evaluations. I often surrender to such demands from students, but I insist that they remember that reading is a subjective experience conditioned by the reader's temperament and framework of reference. Whenever discussion dwindles, strays from the subject, becomes unrewarding, the instructor must take over. Such a plan of combining lecture and discussion within individual classes requires, of course, that instructors be informed, that they have something to teach.

STERG O'DELL

COLORADO COLLEGE

### INSIST ON DISCUSSION

"Gentlemen," said Kant, interrupting his lecture, "Gentlemen, do not scratch so. I am no oracle."

The great philosopher's words go unheard. College teachers (and the teachers of literature in particular) really do consider themselves oracles. The fall of the year is upon us, and the scratching of pens is heard throughout the land. The oracle speaks; the student writes.

With so many lectures there should be many good lecturers. Not so. My wife and I, with eleven years of college between us, can scrape up from our collective recollections about four teachers who were passable in the art; not good, but *passable*. This is not surprising. The lecture method is very old. Originally, it was used to pass on knowledge by brilliant men, speakers of intellect and erudition who would be listened to regardless of the quality of delivery. Occasionally, as in Emerson's case, intelligence was combined with dramatic ability, a combination which only the finest teachers have had. But let's face it: Democracy, the great leveler, has made the art of teaching mediocre, and the average undergraduate never hears his professors speak capably at length in the classroom.

Then why do they persist? Partly because it's easier—not in theory but in practice—to fill up an hour with fairly coherent observations on a subject one is very familiar

with than it is to draw old, tough ideas through young, tender minds. And partly because a monologue so rigidly attended keeps the ego all aglow.

Here is what is bad about lecturing in literature: (1) It is a waste of time; the lecture, if written out, can be read in half the time it takes to deliver it, and the student then has a permanent record. (2) Note-taking is inaccurate and pulls attention away from what is being said. (3) The real purpose of studying literature is to induce thought; but it is possible to earn a degree in English in an American college without ever feeling the warm blush of an idea, original or not; the golden words pass brightly from professor to student's notebook to examination booklet without (as some wag has said) disturbing the mind of either. The ideas in great literature belong in the student's head, not his notebook. The ideas that men live by have to be learned and re-learned, the hard way, the only way, by asking the questions and thinking through the answers all over again.

The teachers of literature should allow, provoke, and *insist* on discussion whenever possible. He should lecture only when the truths he holds clutched to his bosom can be conveyed in no other way.

A. M. TIBBETTS

STATE UNIVERSITY OF IOWA

## CONTROLLED DISCUSSION

The ideal teacher lectures reluctantly—as reluctantly as a physician resorting to a dangerous operation. When his material or the circumstances really demand it, he lectures as illuminatingly as he can; but he is constantly haunted by the suspicion that lecturing is only an expedient substitute for something better.

Too often, he knows, lecturing is mere fact-peddling. It begins with biographic, sociologic, economic, philosophic background, and becomes lost in the underbrush. It consists in telling students what they already know, what they do not need to know, or what they could find as well expressed in a book.

Lecturing, however, can also be provocative and genuinely illuminating. It can focus all the knowledge upon the literary work itself. The lecturer, granted personality, can make a deeper impression than the same thing said in print. But even the most brilliant discourse eventually turns the student into a passive receptacle, a note-taking robot. The eloquent lecturer unwilling to believe this should stop suddenly in the midst of his flow and ask pertinent questions. No matter how bright the class, if lecturing has become the habitual procedure, few if any hearers will transform their supine listening into articulate expression. Why should the student respond? Why should he think? Is not the teacher thinking for him?

All this student passiveness may be good training for a regimented dictatorship but hardly for a society in which citizens are presumed to be thinking, participating individuals.

But discussion can also be, if not so much a danger, a foolish waste of time. Too often it degenerates into ignorant sounding off, chaotic bickering, and the hazy notion that in a free country every opinion is as good as any other.

Since good teaching is an art, no formulas can govern the proportion or timing of lecture and discussion. The ideal teacher, however, holds his lecturing to a minimum, rarely speaks as much as ten minutes without stopping either to needle his hearers with short-answer questions or to invite them to offer examples or comments or queries. For a discussion he chooses the question with care, unless one turns up spontaneously. At the outset he avoids a broadly subjective proposition—such as “What do you think of *The Education of Henry Adams*?”—for he knows that permatense expression of a distaste tends only to confirm it. Discussion should deepen the insight, not merely air ignorance. He prefers, therefore, to ask, “What were Adams’ most educative experiences, and what was their significance?” If the students have been given the question in advance, and if it is repeated on the board, the discussion should be more pointed. It can then become a profitable cooperation, not an aimless squabble. And is not intelligent cooperation the essence of a working democracy?

The ideal teacher remembers that the student learns best by doing, not simply by seeing and hearing. Thoughtful participation is still worth infinitely more than passive listening—on *this* side of the Iron Curtain.

ROBERT BERKELMAN

BATES COLLEGE

## A GOLDEN MEAN

The question is not really whether “the teacher of literature should lecture” or “allow or provoke discussion,” but rather what proportion of each he should strive for, within the limitations of the level of the course, the size of the class, the nature of the subject-matter, the holdings of the library, and other factors.

The overuse and misuse of the lecture are generally recognized. Suffice it to say that

the annually repeated joke, the rehearsed gesture, the solemn *vibrato*, and the final sagging over the lectern, all passion spent, are the marks of a bygone day. The teacher, when he lectures and when he does not, should dramatize the material, not himself. And lectures given *molto inespessivo* or *monotono sostenuto* had best not be given at all.

The teacher of literature should strive to

develop in his students reading habits, tastes, and enthusiasms almost as good as his own, if not better, although hardly the same as his own. Regular interchanges, for which examinations are not substitutes, among students as well as between students and teacher will afford many insights to the teacher, including insights into the literature itself. Because most of us know far too little about our students' actual responses to literature—not their pretended ones—discussion should be provoked and even at times provoking to both parties. It is silly to ban all lecturing; it is far sillier to ban all discussion. An alternation of "lecturettes" (a term I first heard used by Professor Fred B. Millett) and controlled discussion would seem best. The proportion should be left to the individual, for most experienced teachers know their own talents and have instincts which are astonishingly right.

Of course, students, differ, and under the best of conditions it is hard to savor the individualities of all. But the very least we

can do is to get their collective quality in each class, and classes differ widely. You have to find out where the students are before you can lead them. Without discussion how do you find out where they are? Without discussion how do you lead them? Lecturing does work within certain areas in many subjects, but there are fewer such areas in literature, which appeals to individuals or not at all. For the skillful lecturer the wise administrator will always keep a few corners open. But they are small corners.

The last word, and the moral, I leave to be inferred from a proponent of the other side of the question, a transfer who came to me years ago and complained: "At X College Professor Y always used to make a reading assignment and then lecture to us next hour on what it really meant, but you expect us to read it and tell you what we think it means!"

EDWARD FIESS

BROOKLYN COLLEGE

### HOW TO ACHIEVE MAXIMUM PARTICIPATION IN CLASS DISCUSSIONS

Occasionally, as a review device or for a change of pace, an English teacher schedules a class forum focused on an assigned controversial topic ("What College Students See in Whitman Today" or "How Relevant is Aristotle to Modern Drama and Fiction?"). Normally such a discussion-period (often presided over by a student chairman) turns out to have been reasonably effective, with some live issues presented and vigorously kicked around.

Yet you often leave your class room with at least three problems unsolved. (1) About one third of your students sat silent through the entire hour, despite the chairman's efforts to draw them into discussion. (2) You have no sure-fire method to check whether or not a given student prepared adequately to contribute to the forum. (3) You have gained no objective data to aid you in grading every student on his performance during the hour. Three or four swivel-tongued sea-lawyers who monopolized half the time will rate honor-marks (and, maybe, reprimands?), but the majority of your class probably depart assuming

that the hour was just a bull-session, no doubt helpful but without any bearing on marks in your roll-book.

I believe that these three defects can be remedied if you use a work-sheet which might be titled "Student's Preparation Sheet and Record of Participation in a Group Discussion Period." When assigning your forum project, supply each student a copy of this mimeographed work-sheet and have him fill in the discussion topic blank at the top. Then explain that each class member, after reviewing the material, is to write out three original "springboards" on the sheet and bring it to the forum. A "springboard" is metaphorical slang: a device for bouncing the student into the current of discussion. It may be a carefully-formulated question, an affirmation, or a challenge designed to arouse further discussion on a phase of the forum's topic. For Whitman, sample springboards might be these: "Don't you think Whitman's obsession with death is neurotic and unhealthy?" "Personally, Walt's religious views suit me better than present-day Chris-

tianity"; "Who—unless Whitman himself—meets his qualifications of the 'great American bard'?"

Explain that while the forum proceeds, each student is to keep marking his Preparation Sheet—adding notes, jotting down a checkmark to represent each significant remark he contributes in the forum, and indicating whether or not he employed, directly or indirectly, one or more of his "springboards" to spur the discussion. (Students may keep their records in pencil, but their "springboards" should be typed on the work-sheet—procrastinators are thus prevented from hastily jotting down "springboards" during the forum itself.)

Use of this work-sheet accomplishes several purposes. (1) The student has a focal point for his review, and a tangible reminder of the procedure to expect during the forum. (2) When the chairman calls for an opening proposition, every student will have one—the forest of raised hands providing good morale and canceling out that slow uneasy start which characterizes most ordinary forum periods. (3) Assuming

that you will examine the Preparation Sheet he turns in, each student will conscientiously mark his participations, and will have added motivation to jump into the current of discussion. (4) Inspection of the work-sheets will permit you to determine which students had formulated provocative "springboards" and which ones were content with unoriginal or superficial statements. (5) You can ascertain which students, although orally inhibited, nevertheless had on their work-sheets vital "springboards" suggesting abilities you'd not otherwise have suspected. (6) You can detect and encourage students whose records betray they passed up obvious opportunities to participate (or, conversely, usurped an unjustified amount of forum time). (7) Data from the sheets will aid you to mark, if you desire, individual grades on the day's forum preparation and participation.

A copy of this "Preparation Sheet" is available to anyone who sends a stamped addressed envelope to the writer, Box 151, Route 1, Parkville, Mo.

BEN W. FUSON

## CHAUCEUR'S "SHIPMAN'S TALE" IN MODERN DRESS

THEODORE A. STROUD

Ten years ago *The American Magazine* published a story by Thomas Menkel, "Secret Debt" (Jan. 1946, p. 50), which looks offhand merely like one of the innumerable variations on the "Cheater Cheated" theme. A second glance, however, will suggest its intriguing similarity to one of Chaucer's tales.

In summary, Mr. Menkel's already brief version runs as follows:

A woman is offered \$1,000 for a brooch she is wearing by an old friend of her husband's whom she has never met before. Although it is an heirloom greatly prized by her husband, she is so desperately in need of money to pay her bills that she secretly agrees. The next morning she accepts a personal check and plans to tell her husband that the jewelry is lost.

That evening her husband, home from his office, asks if his friend has left a check with her for \$1,000 borrowed from the husband earlier in the day. "He didn't have his checkbook with him. I was sure he was good for it, but you never can tell."

In Chaucer's version the "friend" is Dan John, a monk who serves as purchasing agent for his monastery. He frequents the house of a Paris merchant and awaits an opportunity to violate the laws of hospitality. Ultimately the wife complains about her husband's stinginess and ends by offering to do "what pleasane an dservice" Dan John desires, if only he will give her one hundred franks with which to meet her most pressing debts. Just before the merchant leaves on an extended journey, the monk borrows this sum from him, ostensibly to purchase some livestock. In a few days the monk returns secretly and "In myrthe al nyght a bisy lyf they lede." Much later, when the merchant mentions repayment, the monk informs him that the money has already been returned to the wife.

At this point in the story Chaucer's version differs radically from all known analogues of the "Lover's Gift Returned" (as this folk tale is technically classified; see

J. W. Spargo, *FFC No. 91*, Helsinki, 1930). For Chaucer has the wife refuse to part with the gift, on the ground that she thought the money was a token of their guest's appreciation, and had already spent it. The circumstances, moreover, are so arranged that the husband is able to accept her explanation without losing face.

Anyone who seeks to modernize the tale will soon realize that it is easy to eliminate this "twist" of the "Shipman's Tale" but difficult to bring it up to date. Neither of these alterations, though, would help at all to make this folk tale acceptable to our "family magazines" today. Mr. Menkel insists that all he had to do was to substitute a piece of jewelry for the sexual favors purchased in the ordinary versions. What he modestly deprecates is the ingenuity needed to evade the taboo successfully by making the gift itself what the "lover" really wanted.

Mr. Menkel also assures me that he had never read the "Shipman's Tale" nor any of its analogues, not even the one in Boccaccio's *Decameron* (VIII, 1), which is the only other version widely disseminated today. Instead, he actually started with a "Scotch joke" which he heard at a social gathering. As he recalls it, the joke took the following form:

McTavish was a world traveler, an accomplished playboy, graying but tall and very attractive to women. One day he arrived in New York and was invited by an old college classmate to a party that weekend at his summer home on Long Island. There McTavish met his host's wife and wound up the evening telling her that he would gladly give a thousand dollars if he could sleep with her. She slapped his face but held on to his phone number, given her with the remark that the offer still stood. She thought it over that night, realized that she was short in her personal accounts, and admitted to herself that McTavish

was extremely attractive. So next afternoon she called him. As he left her, McTavish wrote a check to cash for \$1,000 and gave it to her. The husband came home that evening, casually asking about McTavish. When she admitted he had been there, she was dismayed to hear him ask: "And he left a check, of course?" Just that morning McTavish had borrowed the money for a quick deal because his draft hadn't come in from Chicago, and had promised to leave his personal check at the house.

We can trace the medieval ancestry of this twentieth-century fabliau in almost every line, but lack evidence that it is a deliberate borrowing from any known version. Certainly Boccaccio did not tell the story this way: in the *Decameron* a soldier straightforwardly woos the wife; avarice prompts her to ask for a large sum of money; his trick is conceived as a fitting punishment, and the money is paid her in the presence of a witness. Boccaccio's formulation of the story could be preserved without difficulty, and would rival the other forms (see Bryan and Dempster) in narrative power.

After the *Canterbury Tales* and the *Decameron* came to be read and admired all over Europe, it became extremely unlikely that a new version of the tale would emerge independently of one or the other of these two great story collections. The chances are, therefore, that the joke Menkel heard was inspired, though at a considerable remove, by the "Shipman's Tale." The peregrinations of this tale cannot be traced any further, except for the ironical fact that Menkel later sold the rights for republishing his "short short" in Europe. But the information at hand is sufficient to illustrate how, even among the most literate Americans, folk tales are still being transmitted orally and accommodated to the present scene.

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### United Nations Institute—22 and 23 November

Arrangements have just been completed to make possible a United Nations Institute to be held in the UN Building in New York on the Tuesday and Wednesday before the NCTE convention. Sponsoring the Institute will be New York University, the United Nations, and the National Council of Teachers of English.

The program will be an informational one intended to familiarize teachers with details of United Nations organization and operation. Observations of UN groups in session is being planned. The registration fee of \$10.00 will include the cost of two luncheons at the UN plus a guided tour of the Secretariat Building. This fee should be mailed to Professor Frederick L. Redefor, School of Education, New York University, Washington Square, New York 3. Questions about details of the Institute should also be addressed to Professor Redefor.



# Councilletter

Dear Council Members,

With this issue coming out immediately before another Annual Meeting of the National Council of Teachers of English it is perhaps appropriate for the retiring Senior Past President to prepare a final Councilletter. This writer is completing his fourth consecutive and last year as a member of the Executive Committee. Serving as First Vice-President, then President, and for the last two years as Past President, I have reached graduation time.

Let me share with you a few recollections. Probably I shall remember longest the transition period, for I sat with your officers during the last years of Wilbur Hatfield's devoted service as elected Secretary-Treasurer and the first two years of J. N. Hook's leadership as Executive Secretary. It was a great personal experience and a significant moment in the life of the Council to say deep appreciation to Wilbur and to welcome Nick. Mr. Hatfield has carved his name in Council history. Mr. Hook is charting new seas for the Council's future.

That same period of transition brought a new home and a change of address. I guess we burned our bridges behind us and from the ashes of our dead selves will go on to higher things.

Another happy memory is that during those four years two volumes of the Curriculum Commission reports have been brought to publication, and another is on the verge. Nor is this a recollection of the past but rather a challenge for the future. These books have already become landmarks in language arts education, and the forthcoming Volumes 4 and 5, planned and in the writing, will soon join them as guides to a well-integrated and coordinated program of study in language and literature from pre-school through adult education.

The growth of Council membership has only begun. Though size is not our goal, it is important that the great majority of language arts teachers of the nation be affiliated with the Council. With more members the Council is able to extend its services and its influence. And, incidentally, its present membership would do well to become

acquainted with the greatly increased services of the Council in the past year.

Graduation time is appropriately called commencement. Each one of us as we commence a new year faces new challenges and new opportunities. Let us take advantage of the opportunity to join professionally in meeting the challenge to help young and old to use the language more effectively and to appreciate literature more understandingly.

HARLEN M. ADAMS, *Past President*  
CHICO STATE COLLEGE

## EUROPEAN TOURS

The NCTE is tentatively planning to sponsor three European Tours in the summer of 1956. If the plans work out successfully, details should be available by mid-January. Here is a summary of the preliminary plans.

(1) The Council will select leaders, who will work out detailed arrangements with a reliable commercial concern, securing the advantages in prices and accommodations that accrue to persons traveling in groups. The Council's share in the planning will be a free service to its members.

(2) The tours will be, basically, pilgrimages for those with a keen interest in literature, but will also include visits to sites of historical and artistic fame. Some free time for short individual jaunts will be provided. It is hoped that a number of lectures and meetings with European teachers and other more or less prominent persons can be arranged. The number of travelers in each tour will be limited to approximately twenty.

(3) Expenses of the leaders, who will be Council members, will be included in the overall cost. Also included will be all transportation, comfortable accommodations, guide-fees, admission fees to places of interest including some theaters, and all meals except on individual jaunts.

(4) Transportation will probably be by one-class ship, with the possibility that some members may fly if they prefer. The cost will probably be somewhat greater for those who choose to fly.

(5) Tour 1 will be planned for those who have not previously been in Europe and will

follow a somewhat conventional itinerary, probably including England, Holland, France, Germany, and Italy. Time in Europe: about six weeks, plus about a week each way on the boat. Probable cost: \$1,000 to \$1,200. Tour 2 will be for those who have already traveled abroad, and will get somewhat off the beaten track. It is possible that Spain and Scandinavia will replace one or two of the countries chosen for Tour 1. Time in Europe: about the same as for Tour 1. Probable cost: slightly more than for Tour 1. Tour 3 will be confined to the British Isles. Its cost will probably be \$200 to \$400 less than that of Tour 1, and the stay is likely to be about four weeks.

#### COLLEGE SECTION COMMITTEES

*Dear Council Members,*

As one might expect, the seven committees sponsored by the College Section vary year by year in quality and amount of performance. During this year, for example, two new committees have made remarkable progress in their brief lives, one old committee has been successfully reactivated, and two or three steady and dependable committees have continued their usual high standards.

One of the successful newcomers is the Committee on the Preparation and Certification of Teachers, Donald R. Tuttle, Chairman. Its function is "to assemble and make available for the use of interested persons information relevant to the improvement of standards for the preparation and certification of teachers."

Another newcomer is William M. Gibson's Committee on College and Adult Reading List. Boasting a list of distinguished members from the American Library Association, the Adult Education Association, the College English Association, and NCTE, the Committee met this Autumn "to determine the division of labor in supervising and producing an annotated reading list of the best works in literature, history, music, and art which are generally available to an English-reading, primarily American audience." This important and portentous job merits all the encouragement that College Sections members can give.

The long-established Committee on Bibliography of College Teaching of English, fallen recently on evil days, has reasserted

itself under its brisk young Chairman, John McKiernan, and his geographically widely-distributed colleagues.

"The immediate aim of the Committee is to prepare an annotated bibliography of current articles from July 1955 on, while simultaneously researching the period July 1954 through June 1955. This bibliography is to be ready for publication in the late spring of 1956. Eventually, the gap from 1949 to July 1954 will be closed.

"The journals being searched are those in which one or more articles on the college teaching of English appeared during the 1945-49 period and such other magazines as the Committee may chance upon. The editor of *College English* has been apprised of the ambition to have the initial installment of the bibliography ready for spring publication."

If the Committee on Comparative Literature, ably served by Acting Chairman Ernest C. Hassold this year, may be called our steadiest and most dependable one, certainly Edward Foster's CCENS may be called our most colorful and enthusiastic one. While promoting the *Yearbook* and the forthcoming *Guide to Comparative Literature*, Mr. Hassold's Committee has tried "to ascertain the extent to which various NCTE committees can be of help to one another in furthering their work and in promoting world-mindedness in teacher and students of English." Results have been heartening. The scope and glamor of CCENS is best displayed in the full-length annual report, which interested College Section members should see.

Your new College Section Chairman, Warner Rice, is the able helmsman of the Committee on the Education of College Teachers of English. A member of the MLA Commission on Trends in Education, Mr. Rice is always impressive on this subject. He and his Committee continue to study "the special preparation of young teachers for service in elementary courses through supervised in-service training, cooperation with schools of education, revised graduate curricula," and certification. The College Section will reach new heights under his leadership.

BRICE HARRIS, *Chairman*  
*College Section Committee*

PENNSYLVANIA STATE UNIVERSITY

# Current English Forum

CONDUCTED BY THE NCTE COMMITTEE ON CURRENT ENGLISH USAGE

MARGARET M. BRYANT, *Chairman*

## VERY OR VERY MUCH

Q. Is it correct to use *very* with the past participle? (C. P. G.)

A. Some authorities state that *very* must be followed by *much* or *well* or some other adverb when it modifies a participle: "He was *very much* excited." In many instances the verbal force of a participle denoting a physical or mental state is weakened to the extent that the participle is felt to be an adjective entirely: *tired, torn, troubled, worn, pleased*. It is good usage to say "I am *very tired*" or "a *very tired man*"; "a *very worn book*" or "He looks *very worn*." One may speak "of a *pleased person*," or say, "I am *pleased*," and since *pleased* seems to function attributively, it has come to be modified by *very*: one now hears "I am *very pleased*." The definition of *very* in the OED (B.2.c.) reads "Qualifying past participles used predicatively or attributively = *Very much*." From this statement it is clear that *very* occurs in Standard English modifying a past participle. Usage sanctions *very* when the past participle is felt to be a pure adjective. Since one may say "a celebrated man," it is permissible to say, "The man was *very celebrated*." To show how both forms may be employed, here is a statement made by an English professor: "He is *very much* concerned with the state of the world and *very* concerned to help it." (M. M. B.)

## TYPE AS ADJECTIVE

Q. It *type* now acceptable in expressions like *better type plastic*, *a special type plane*, which I hear often? (R. G. P.)

A. In popular speech today one hears the elliptical expressions *new type construction*, *that type personality* instead of the expanded forms with *of* employed in formal English. *Type* is joined to other words, often by means of a hyphen, to form adjectives, which modify nouns. *New-type*, for example, is thought of as a unit. In the

*New York Times* we may read in the headlines of *Family-Type Burlesque* or *Old-Type Format*; in the advertisements of *new-type springs, tubes, and motors*; in the magazine of *American-type gadgets* and *B-29-type propellers*. In the colleges and universities the professors often speak of *the academic type man*, *the essay-type question*, and *the better type college*. In formal English, however, *the better type of college* is preferred. (M. M. B.)

## IF OR WHETHER

Q. May *if* instead of *whether* be used to introduce a noun clause? (D. P. W.)

A. There is divided usage between *if* and *whether* in introducing noun clauses implying doubt or uncertainty: "The groceryman was not certain *whether (if)* our order had been sent"; "I wonder *whether (if)* he will come"; "He asked *whether (if)* the bags had been delivered." *If* has been employed since the time of *Beowulf* not only in adverbial clauses of condition ("If he comes, I shall go."), but in noun clauses, generally after such verbs as *see, know, doubt, wonder, and ask*. *Whether* is usually followed by *or*, but not consistently: "I don't know *whether* I can (or not)"; "Let's see *whether* you can write." Likewise, *if* may be followed by *or* to express an alternative: "I don't know *if* I can (or not)." After the verb *see*, *if* is more common: "Will you *see if* the word is in the dictionary?" Euphony and rhythm are considerations entering into the choice between *if* and *whether*. "Would you mind *if* I sat beside you for a while?" is more euphonious than "Would you mind *whether*. . . ?" Both *if* and *whether* may be employed in one sentence: "When we hear their double talk, we wonder *if* they think they are fooling us or *whether* they are wasting time until the President gives his consent." In formal or literary English, however, *whether* is more common when a choice is emphasized: "I

asked him *whether* he wanted fiction *or* non-fiction." (M. M. B.)

#### IT IS I AND THE LIKE

In the March number of this journal Mr. Norman C. Stageberg takes up a matter that has often been dealt with but has never been settled to general satisfaction: the present status of usage, in standard colloquial speech, when it comes to utterances like "It is I . . ." After stating the problem and giving, in brief, the grammatical background, Mr. Stageberg reports on a test that he and Capt. William Clark gave to a group of "over a thousand officers and airmen" in 1952. He describes this test as "a listening survey of word usage which included 32 sentences with personal pronouns as subjective complements." Those who took the test were told to mark with a plus sign the sentences they "might normally and comfortably use" in conversation with friends; with a zero sign the sentences they "would avoid using" in such conversations. For further details the reader is referred to Mr. Stageberg's paper. I would call special attention to his final statement: "we need much careful quantitative research, research which gathers its records from the spontaneous utterances that constitute our living language."

It is clear that the sentences of which Mr. Stageberg's test consists were not spontaneous utterances of the officers whose speech was being investigated; they were utterances supplied to these officers in a test. The author's statistics throw light not on the actual usage of the officers he examined but on the reactions of these officers when they had to vote for or against thirty-two grammatical candidates without being given time to take thought. If they had been allowed to stew a while before casting each ballot the results might have been different but still would have reflected their reactions in a test rather than their normal usage. The author's conclusions, then, are not even "tentatively justified" by the evidence presented.

Many of the sentences used in the test strike me as artificial concoctions that would seldom if ever be heard in real life, whatever the case of the pronoun. The first two sentences listed are:

1. It's they who got the clearance.

2. It's them who borrowed the tools.

If I had been speaking, these utterances would have taken another form:

1. They are the ones that got the clearance.
2. They are the ones that borrowed the tools.

I suspect that the officers under examination talk that way too in their "spontaneous utterances." But the test provides no alternative to the "It is I/It is me" type of construction, and most of the voters seem to have felt that they must choose between the two forms of this type, though a few were alert enough to vote both forms down. In general, the type "It is I/It is me" does not sound natural to me in colloquial style if a relative clause follows; instead, I use the "I am the one" type. In formal speech, however, "I am the one" would never do, and "It is me" would be equally out of place; here only the "It is I" type is usable, whether a relative clause follows or not. I cannot say to what extent these distinctions are made in the speech of others, but I have the impression that I am not alone in making them.

KEMP MALONE

JOHNS HOPKINS UNIVERSITY

#### LET'S US

Do you ever hear your friends say, "Let's us go to town"? If so, you can tell them that some other nice people now use the same sort of double-talk. This statement is on the authority of one of our best known scientific linguists, Dr. Charles C. Fries.

For several years Dr. Fries has been engaged in a study of American speech. As the chief basis of his study he has collected "some fifty hours of mechanically recorded conversations on a great range of topics—conversations in which the participants were entirely unaware that their speech was being recorded." Since these recordings were made "in a university community [around the University of Michigan], they may be taken as representing the informal conversation of certain cultured persons in that community." In 1952 Dr. Fries published a partial report of his study in *The Structure of English*, a book now well known to readers of this journal. On page 104 he says, "The use of *us* with *lets* [no apostrophe]

occurs rather frequently." As an example he gives this sentence: "*Lets us* take the elite type and not wait for the others."

Common observation will tell us, we must admit, that "let's us" may be heard in cultured communities other than the one from which Dr. Fries takes his recordings. But the same observation will tell us that "let us" or its contraction "let's" is also used alongside it with the same meaning. The two forms are therefore in competition for survival.

Now, if the expression "let's us," thought now to be relatively uncommon, grows until it is finally the common one, then "let's" without assistance may become, in the language of the dictionaries, first archaic and then obsolete. "Let's us" may possibly replace it in standard usage. When this happens—if indeed it ever does—the grammarian will accept it and do his best to explain it as an anomaly—one of those things which make intelligent foreigners lose their hair in the effort to learn our language. But there is one thing the grammarian can do before this sad prospect becomes a reality. He can remind the people of culture in Dr. Fries's university community, as well as people of culture throughout the country, of just what they are doing when they substitute "let's us" for "let's." He can tell them that "let's" developed historically from "let us" in exactly the same way as "don't" developed from "do not," "I'll" from "I will," "he'd" from "he did," etc., through a long series of contractions which have become thoroughly established in standard usage. If we now add "us" to "let's" to form "let's us," there is no logical reason against adding "not" to "don't" to form "don't not," "will" to "I'll" to form "I'll will," "did" to "he'd" to form "he'd did," etc.

If the people of culture in Dr. Fries's university community, or the people of culture in other communities, wish to say, "*Let's us* take the elite type," then *let'em* them do it; but *let'em* them understand that what they are saying is, "*Let us us* take the elite type."

P. S. The reader must not infer that Dr. Fries approves "let's us." As a scientific linguist, he reports merely what he sees and hears.

ARWARD STARBUCK

IOWA STATE COLLEGE

#### PARENTHETICAL PLUS AND AND

The principle that a verb agrees with its subject in number must allow a large margin for variation. Current usage varies considerably in numerous constructions, including that in which a singular subject is augmented by phrases introduced by *with*, *together with*, *as well as*, *no less than*, etc.: "The president, as well as many correspondents, were impressed" (*Christian Science Monitor*, 25 July 1953, p. 9); "a reprimand, as well as a lecture on discipline, was forthcoming" (Gene Fowler, *A Solo in Tom-Toms*, 1946, p. 212). Pooley (*Teaching English Usage*, p. 84) offers a principle to explain the second variation: "Ordinarily in such sentences the augmentation of the subject is so distinctly parenthetical as to be without influence on the number of the subject, so that a singular noun, though augmented, is followed by a singular verb." The principle is reasonable enough, though how distinctly parenthetical the augmentation is would seem to depend less on such signs of parenthesis as commas than on whether the writer used a singular or plural verb—as in the quotations above. Whether the verb is ordinarily singular with *as well as* or the rather overlooked connective *plus* remains doubtful. Casual collecting furnishes eight *plus* sentences with plural verbs, none with singular, regardless of the presence or absence of marks of parenthesis: "and his recent Midwestern trip, plus the Gallup poll, show" (*Life*, 26 July 1953, p. 16); "factional strife within the majority party, plus the indecisiveness of the Chief Executive, have brought" (Max Ascoli, *Reporter*, 24 Nov. 1953, p. 11); "Ike—plus a carefully vague promise to do something about Korea, plus the irritations and disappointments which had piled up during twenty years—were enough" (John Fischer, *Harper's*, Mar. 1953, p. 24); "Even Princess Elizabeth, heiress presumptive to the Crown, plus her husband and Margaret, dine" (John Pudney, *NYTM*, 10 Dec. 1950, p. 24); "that circumstance, plus general awareness of the responsibilities entailed by the industrial leadership of the United States, have actuated" (C. E. Ayres, *SRL*, 14 Oct. 1950, p. 12); "Patient and energetic marshaling of public opinion plus education of youngsters toward more



wholesome alternatives are the remedies" (CSM, 30 July 1954, p. 9); "But the war weariness of France plus the vastly stepped-up munitions aid by Communist China to the guerrilla forces have" (CSM, 20 Feb. 1954, p. 9); "the measures which experience plus economic theory have evolved" (Joseph C. Harsch, CSM, 7 Apr. 1954, p. 1).

Another parenthetical construction—the use of the connective *and* together with commas or dashes—has also been largely overlooked. Casual collection here reveals a decided variation—20 examples with the singular verb, 16 with the plural. Although the citations are too few to make any valid generalizations, a few tentative observations are offered. The singular verb appears more frequently (4 times to 1) when a singular subjective complement is used: "Regimentation during a war period, and its abnormal spending, are a cheap price" (George Norris, *Fighting Liberal*, 1945, p. 399); "chocolate, and water from one of the tarns, was our fortifier" (Edward Weeks, *Atlantic*, Mar. 1953, p. 75); "The denial of love, and what the denial leads to, is the theme" (John K. Hutchens, *NYHT*, review, as reprinted by Book-of-the-Month Club, May 1951); "the director, Captain Tom Crocker, and every member of his staff is a reformed alcoholic" (*Life*, 27 Dec. 1954, p. 6); "The punishment of hunger, and that he is against something that he does not comprehend, is everything" (Hemingway, *The Old Man and the Sea*, 1952, p. 84). The singular verb also appears more frequently (5 times to 1) when dashes rather than commas are used: "the junior senator from Wisconsin—and the Senate leadership—have taken" (CSM, 10 Mar. 1954, p. 16); "Soviet Policy—and the general official Soviet atmosphere—has become" (Wm. H. Stringer, CSM, 29 Nov. 1954, p. 1); "This substance—and others

of a similar nature—has been given" (Funk and Harrow, *Harper's*, Feb. 1923, p. 360); "his interest—and the book's charm—lies" (H. Birney, *NYTBR*, 17 Sept. 1950, p. 7); "This decision to make a course out of what the die-hard opposition considered 'unrelated reading'—and incidentally the success which attended the teaching method—constitutes the pivot" (Jacques Barzun, *Atlantic*, Dec. 1952, pp. 79-80); "Stanky—and apparently everybody else in the park—was" (Gayle Talbot, *Lansing State Journal*, 23 July 1954, p. 26).

As the last two quotations above illustrate with *incidentally* and *apparently*, the singular verb is also more frequent (7 times to 1) when some word or phrase reinforces the idea of parenthesis or "aside": "only the government, and perhaps the Roman Catholic church, know" (AP, *Lansing State Journal*, 22 Oct. 1954, p. 19); "The finest and maturest of Memling's Virgins, and in truth the whole of his religious spirit, is exemplified" (Thomas Craven, *A Treasury of Art Masterpieces*, 1939, p. 214); "His existence and by implication his eminence, has" (*Reporter*, 18 Nov. 1954, p. 47); "Don't think that Cleveland, and particularly Hank Greenberg, has lost" (Hank Greenberg, *Life*, 27 Sept. 1954, p. 143); "the personnel, and probably the technique, of the Un-American Activities Committee is" (*New Yorker*, 27 Nov. 1948, p. 23); "The clothing in the closets . . . , and even the medicine . . . , was all used" (J. P. Marquand, *B. F.'s Daughter*, 1946, p. 9).

Conversely, if commas rather than dashes are used, if a singular subjective complement is not present, and if no words of augmentation or parenthesis reinforce the commas, in this material the plural verb appears more frequently than the singular.

ROBERT J. GEIST

MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

## Memorandum

Have you made travel arrangements and a reservation at the Commodore or Roosevelt Hotel in New York City for the NCTE Convention during Thanksgiving Week? Attend professional meetings on Thursday, Friday, and Saturday; take advantage of tours, theatres, and the UN Institute on the other days.

# Letter to the Editor

## HAMLET TO OPHELIA

Sir:

Professor Goddard's ingenious theory attributing to Polonius Hamlet's (alleged) letter to Ophelia would assuage the pain and bewilderment which many people have felt about this composition, and would incidentally serve to explain why the Reynaldo scene is developed at such length. It would also eliminate the puzzling question of *when* Ophelia had showed her father the letter. In their first conversation she says that Hamlet has "of late made many tenders/Of his affection to me"; but no letter is produced. After receiving her father's commands, she tells him (II. i. 108-110) that she has "repelled" further letters; hence she certainly would not show him a later letter, even on the unlikely assumption that she had not told the truth. If genuine, therefore, the letter must have been written earlier, and Ophelia must rather inexplicably have delayed showing it to her father until shortly before he reads it to the King.

Yet the theory attributing authorship to Polonius does, I think, raise at least as many questions as it answers. For instance, Professor Goddard remarks that the word *beautified*, in this context, sounds quite unlike Hamlet and quite like Polonius. True enough. But he proceeds to explain Polonius' own objection to the word on the grounds that, ever the courtier, Polonius is echoing a displeasure which the King has just intimated and which is further explained by the King's own disparaging use of *beautied* in the next act. That an audience should be expected to grasp all this—even with the help of considerable stage business—is, I believe, improbable. The King's use of *beautied* is more or less incidental. On the other hand, Polonius has pointedly called the attention of the King (and so of the audience) to *beautified* as a "boner" on Hamlet's part. What more natural, therefore, than that the audience, with a sudden feeling of enlightenment, should a few minutes later connect this supposed boner with Hamlet's subsequent raging at

Ophelia: "I have heard of your paintings, well enough. God hath given you one face, and you make yourselves another." Add Hamlet's assertion at the grave that he loved Ophelia "more than forty thousand brothers," and we have not only a possible argument in favor of his having written the letter but a possible explanation of his whole relation with her.

By the time Hamlet sees the Ghost, Ophelia has received her father's commands, and Hamlet's later behavior in Ophelia's closet may be caused partly by her refusal to see or hear him. But the letter, which contains no hint of this refusal, must have preceded the Ghost's disclosure. Already, however, Hamlet has been disillusioned by his mother's remarriage; and without too much modern psychologizing we can judge that this disillusionment has been carried over to women in general. ("Frailty, thy name is woman!") The nunnery scene shows just the mixture of attraction and repulsion which seems believable under these circumstances. Perhaps the letter reveals the same mixture; if so, this combination of emotions might help to account for the artificiality of its style. In short, it is altogether possible that Hamlet's behavior to Ophelia throughout the play is explicable almost entirely in terms of the *struggle between love and disillusionment*. . . .

Professor Goddard's theory also depends in part on an interpretation of Polonius which appears to me untenable. He argues that Ophelia sees her father as the "unfeeling" man that he is and therefore would have been unlikely to confide in him. Actually, however, her love for Polonius seems demonstrated by the fact that in her madness, her thoughts are as much agitated by his death as by Hamlet. Nor would the love be hard to explain. We have no reason to doubt that Polonius has his daughter's welfare at heart. Like Laertes, he advises caution on rather sensible grounds. Furthermore, it is not quite true, despite Professor Goddard, that Polonius can never admit a

mistake. This is precisely what he does after Ophelia tells him of Hamlet's visit to her—and in a manner that carries no suggestion of the tyrannical father. He does not announce his theory to the King until he has received evidence which might have led wiser men to the same conclusion; and his reasons for wanting the King to know it may conceivably be legitimate ones.

Needless to say, these considerations do not turn us into ardent admirers of Polonius. Nor do they eliminate the possibility

that he might have used forgery to reinforce what he believed to be fact. But they do, I think, cast some doubts on this theory. Perhaps, too, they make him for the moment a faintly pathetic character, not wholly absurd or wholly villainous, and hence enable us to feel relief when Hamlet finally says over the dead body: "For this same lord, I do repent."

DORIS B. GAREY

FISS UNIVERSITY

### Romantic Poets

When Wordsworth found the world too much  
He wandered friendly as a cloud,  
Primrose- and lark-delighted miles  
Elect from the contagious crowd.

Sometimes blithe Shelley's half a soul,  
Winging alone the vast inane,  
Confused its aerial sister half  
With singing, half-a-body Jane.

The fears Keats had that he might cease  
Spun such a dreaming out of him,  
So true, so beautiful, so stout  
He swung cocooned from a bent limb.

Byron, who heard a solitude  
Echoing pure in his proud head,  
Sequestered—that he might not dream—  
With dandy ladies stripped for bed.

But Coleridge the Christian forces  
Us feastward sinners to our knees  
To share with him the images  
Confession brings from nether seas.

GEORGE P. ELLIOTT

## News and Ideas

PERSONAL LETTERS FROM SEAN O'Casey to an American college senior are published in the *Bulletin* of Randolph-Macon College for September 1954, some of them containing information possibly not accessible elsewhere.

THE MAKERS OF OLD CROW BOURBON are offering \$250 for each authenticated reference to the whiskey in literature or history. They have already paid off on tributes involving Jack London, Mark Twain, and Bret Harte. Send yours to Old Crow Historical Bureau, 149 Madison Ave., N.Y.

CLIFTON FADIMAN AND HIS EXPERTS have need of good literary questions for use in their annual Book Festival quiz, to be recorded at the NCTE meeting in November. Send them to Bennett Cerf, *The Saturday Review*, 25 W. 45th St., N.Y.

MENCKEN AND DR. JOHNSON ARE compared in an enlightening juxtaposition by William Manchester in the 10 September *Saturday Review*. The article reminds us that—incredible as it may seem now—when the first edition of *The American Language* appeared in 1919, “an entire convention of the NCTE was given over to denunciations of it.”

WITH A TRADITION FROM MELVILLE to Michener behind it, the international South Pacific Commission is searching that area for manuscripts of folklore, history, biography, and crafts. Did you come across any during your tour—military or vacation—that should be printed? This does *not* include the infamous *Legends of Old Saipan*, which the internationally-known artist and practical joker Hugh Troy nearly foisted on *Reader's Digest*.

“THE SEA IN LITERATURE” IS THE subject of a brief but sweeping essay by the noted naval historian, Professor Samuel Eliot Morison (Harvard) in the September *Atlantic*. With highest praise for poetic passages by Homer, Aeschylus, Vergil, Dante, and Camöens, Morison also cites modern poems by Masfield, Roy Campbell,

and T. S. Eliot. He discusses the British *proseurs* Defoe, Smollett, Clark Russell, Michael Scott, Stevenson, and Conrad—commending, as one might expect, the last as best—and the Americans Cooper and Melville, Dane and Mahan, and Arthur H. Clark; the conclusion is a fine and timely tribute to Walt Whitman.

A MEMOIR OF A MODEL TEACHER and academic, Irwin Edman, by his friend and colleague James Gutmann, appears in *The Saturday Review* for 3 September. Edman was not only a solid philosopher but a knowledgeable lover of the arts, a brilliant writer of light verse, and one of the great classroom personalities.

WHO ARE THE GREATEST LIVING playwrights? Sean O'Casey, Thornton Wilder, and Tennessee Williams would seem to be the answer, judging from the “favorite” dramatists listed by the most successful living American playwrights in a comprehensive but compact questionnaire in the 3 September *Saturday Review*. Wilder himself chose Eduardo de Filippo, and Williams wouldn't answer any questions.

AND JUST WHO IS EDUARDO DE FILIPPO? As described by William Weaver in *Theatre Arts* for May, he is a member of the “First Family of Italy's Stage,” a popular actor (with his sister Titina and brother Peppino) who has created a Chaplin-like *maschera*, or tragi-comic character who “takes over,” no matter what the play. More than this, he is a playwright of great power, “the best in Italy and one of the best alive anywhere,” the author of *Napoli Milionaria!* (Naples in the American occupation), *Questi Fantasmi!* (deceived husband), *La Paura Numero Uno* (war), *La Grande Magia* (illusions), *Mia Famiglia* (family relationships), *Uomo e Galantuomo* (ham actors), *Non ti Pago* (lottery players), and so on. Further, he is a producer who has just rebuilt the Teatro San Ferdinando in Naples and is presenting a nineteenth-century Neapolitan repertory there. Why haven't we heard more about him before?

CRITICS DO NOT TAKE LOUISA MAY Alcott as seriously as they do her father Bronson. Yet two recent photographs surprisingly demonstrate her apparent popularity among Common Readers. Miss Alcott appeared as frontispiece for R. F. Richards' *Concise Dictionary of American Literature* this year, and her charming house in Concord is the first in a series of Literary Landmarks in the 3 September *Saturday Review*. First the Melville revival, then the James, now Louisa May?

AND MAYBE HARRIET BEECHER Stowe, whos is the subject of one of those Edmund Wilson reviews in the tradition of the nineteenth-century periodical, in the 10 September *New Yorker*. Wilson was tremendously impressed by a reprinting of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* a few years ago, and is now stimulated by Charles H. Foster's *The Runless Ladder: Harriet Beecher Stowe and New England Puritanism*. Both writers emphasize Mrs. Stowe's bouts with Calvinism.

THE FIRST ISSUE OF "A SCHOLARLY and critical journal" called *Twentieth Century Literature*, published by The Swallow Press in Denver, appeared last April with articles on Fitzgerald and Conrad, Hardy's *Mayor*, Proust, and James's *American Scene*, together with a list of verse of the almost unknown poet Hazel Hall (1886-1924). The most useful feature is a lengthy Current Bibliography, which lists and epitomizes articles in both American and foreign periodicals.

A SYLLABUS FOR BUSINESS LETTER Writing Courses is available from The American Business Writing Association, 101 David Kinley Hall, University of Illinois, Urbana, Illinois. It outlines methods of handling various types of letters and provides suggestions for assignments for students. The price of the Syllabus is \$1, but it is free to new ABWA members. Annual membership dues are \$3.

HOMER'S *ODYSSEY* RETAINS ITS

fascination for college students living in an age of guided missiles and atomic energy. *The Odyssey* was voted the most popular work studied in a two-semester survey of European and American literature, at Westminster College, New Wilmington, Pennsylvania. Seventy-five students of 135 polled in an informal query selected *The Odyssey* in preference to the works of Aeschylus, Sophocles, Euripides, Aristophanes, Plato, Virgil and Chaucer. Virgil's *Aeneid* was voted the story "I liked least."

More than 60 students of 160 asked to name popular choices on a second semester ballot selected Hemingway's novel of love and war, *A Farewell to Arms*, as the best piece of literature in the course. Hemingway attracted more votes than any of his rivals, Shakespeare, Milton, Molière, Franklin, Goethe, Emerson, and Whitman. Turgenev's *Fathers and Sons* was a close second choice while Milton's *Areopagitica* was termed the least interesting work.

THE FRANKEST ACCOUNT IN RECENT literary biography is "Dylan Thomas in Wales," in the October *Atlantic*, part of a book which Thomas' American friend (and poet) John Malcolm Brinnin, has written. An embarrassing marital *contretemps* and Mrs. Thomas' scornful comment on Brinnin's report of it guarantee readers for the sequels by both these figures.

A SYMPOSIUM ON EDUCATION—"now and to come"—is the substance of the Fall *Antioch Review*. The seven articles consider various aspects of modern education, from Dewey to British methods, but have in common an interest in unifying American attitudes.

THE CLASSICAL REVIVAL IN translation continues in No. 2 of *The Quarterly Review of Literature* (still no date given) with four Martial epigrams by Dudley Fitts (Andover) and three pieces from Bacchylides (the Theseus dithyramb and two odes for Hieron) by Richmond Lattimore (Bryn Mawr), and in imitation with an eclogue by Jane Mayhall.



# New Books

## Poetry

THE DREAM IS CERTAIN, Doris Hedges (Christopher, 32 pp., \$1.50). A short narrative poem by a Canadian writer of verse and fiction.

LONDON: AN AMERICAN APPRECIATION, Ruth Slonim (Bruce Humphries, 64 pp., \$2). Rather literal verse about metropolitan places.

THE CENTER IS EVERYWHERE, E. L. Mayo (Twayne, 64 pp., \$2.75). Mayo, first winner of the Amy Lowell traveling scholarship, is a very satisfying poet, with depth, ease, and humor. An introduction by Francis R. McCarthy draws conclusions in general and about particular poems; one wishes that most slim volumes had such helpful prefaces.

NO NEW COUNTRY, Sara King Carle-

ton (Bookman, 94 pp., \$2.75). Even but undistinguished verses by a vigorous woman.

A CHARACTER INVENTED, LeRoy Smith, Jr. (Macmillan, 48 pp., \$3). Thirty-three lyrical poems built around the character of Adam, or Man, "in his struggle to define reality and himself." The author, who teaches at Gettysburg, knows what he is doing, and his lines always have an authority to them.

JUBILATE AGNO, Christopher Smart, ed. W. H. Bond (Harvard, 171 pp., \$3.25). This poem, the manuscript of which was not found till 1930, represents an attempt to adapt to English verse some of the principles of Hebrew verse as expounded by Bishop Lowth in 1753. The editor is a member of the Houghton Library staff.

## Fiction

THE EMPRESS'S RING, Nancy Hale (Scribner's, 192 pp., \$3). With such academic connections in the author's family as Nathan Hale, Edward Everett Hale, Lucretia Hale, Harriet Beecher Stowe, and Fredson Bowers, Miss Hale's three stories of a Southern university in this collection find a specious rationale for especial mention here. They are good stories, two of them possibly to be appreciated only by college teachers. But her chief setting in most of these recent tales, as *New Yorker* readers pride themselves on knowing, is the composite

home of childhood, where well-meaning but stupid adults (1) spoil or (2) attempt to be, children. The second of these themes is the heart of the two best stories: "A Full Life," wherein a jaded lady seeks a cheap vicarious thrill in the sensitivity of her old school friend, now psychically unstable, and gets her come-uppance; and "The New Order," in which—most movingly—post-post-bellum white and Negro momentarily return to personal interdependence. This book will do no harm to the reputation of the American Katherine Mansfield.

## Bibliography and Reference

BIBLIOGRAPHY OF MEDIEVAL DRAMA, Carl J. Stratman (California, 423 pp., \$5). These lists by a Loyola professor comprise what will be the standard work for many years, according to J. W. Spargo. The book includes collections of plays, *Festschriften*, bibliographies of bibliogra-

phies, early liturgical works, mysteries, miracles, and moralities, Byzantine, Latin, and Continental forms, foreign language scholarship, serials in libraries, and special lists on Hrotswitha—in short, everything. In vari-

THE BOOK LOVER'S SOUTHWEST: A GUIDE TO GOOD READING, Walter S. Campbell (Oklahoma, 287 pp., \$4.50). A survey of books about the Southwest region—biographies, guidebooks, folklore, histories, fiction, poetry, etc.—by the University of Oklahoma teacher of writing who, usually under the name of Stanley Vestal, has himself written two dozen books.

PROVERBS FOR PLEASURE: UNCOMMON SAYINGS, H. Pullar Strecker (Philosophical Library, 202 pp., \$6). Proverbs arranged according to affinity and contrast of meanings.

LAROUSSE'S FRENCH - ENGLISH ENGLISH-FRENCH DICTIONARY (Pocket Books, 260 pp., .50, paper). If only the binding were sewn instead of pasted, this would be an excellent buy.

BIBLIOGRAPHY OF CHAUCER, 1908-1953, Dudley D. Griffith (University of Washington, 398 pp., \$5). A complete inventory of Chaucerian scholarship to 1953 is now available in two books: Miss Ham-

mond's *Chaucer: A Bibliographical Manual* for the period before 1908, and Washington Professor Griffith's new bibliography. This new book offers complete coverage for general subjects—life, general criticism, literary relations, style—and for each of Chaucer's works. Six background sections are selective and intended primarily as bibliographical aids. Particularly valuable are frequent, brief descriptions of contents and extensive lists of reviews. Despite the inexcusable failure to include some blank pages for omissions and additions, all teachers and scholars must rejoice at the appearance of this indispensable tool.

BARNET KOTTLER

DUKE UNIVERSITY

THOMAS HARDY: A BIBLIOGRAPHICAL STUDY, Richard L. Purdy (Oxford, 388 pp., \$9). A listing of the *original* printing of everything Hardy wrote, with the location and description of all manuscripts known to survive. The development of texts is traced by Purdy of Yale through subsequent editions, and notes on many poems are included.

## Types and Historical Anthologies

THE COLLEGE OMNIBUS, ed. Leonard F. Dean (Harcourt, Brace, 8th ed., 1108 pp., \$4.50). The new edition (it must be good!) has mostly all new short stories and some new essays, plays, and poems, with a new "graded" arrangement of poems, by the Chairman of English at Connecticut.

ESSAYS, ed. Leonard F. Dean (Harcourt, Brace, 251 pp., \$1.45). In paper covers, from the revised *College Omnibus*.

PREFACE TO DRAMA: AN INTRODUCTION TO DRAMATIC LITERATURE AND THEATRE ART, Charles W. Cooper (Ronald, 773 pp., \$4.50). Cooper of Whittier College sets up 184 pages of introductory essays on dramatic theory, with five short plays as examples, and then prints eight classic plays from *Antigone* to *The Crucible* with professional commentaries and suggestions for study. The emphasis is on both theatre and classroom.

WALT WHITMAN POEMS: SELECTIONS WITH CRITICAL AIDS, ed., Gay W. Allen and Charles T. Davis (N.Y.U., 280 pp., \$3.75). In the centenary year of *Leaves of Grass*, it is shocking to realize that this supplementary book has been needed for one hundred years. Whitmaniana has been mostly just that, with only a few scattered explications of poems. Professor Allen (N.Y.U.) having made a name as a Whitman historian and biographer, here joins a colleague and makes the first selection of Whitman's verse itself (forty poems) to have satisfactory specific commentaries. There is also a fifty-page prefatory essay on Walt's poetic method in general.

POEMS OF BEN JONSON, ed. George B. Johnston (Harvard, 353 pp., \$3.75). For the Muses Library, Professor Johnston of Virginia Polytechnic Institute has edited the poems in a beautiful pocket-size volume.

BYRON: A SELECTION FROM HIS POEMS, ed., A. S. B. Glover (Penguin, 365 pp., 85¢, paper). A few short poems,

but the selections are mostly from the long ones.

## Literary Texts

WHITMAN'S MANUSCRIPTS: LEAVES OF GRASS (1860), ed. Fredson Bowers (Chicago, 264 pp., \$12.50). This is a diplomatic reprint (that is, neither facsimile text nor edition) of both the 1860 (third edition) *Leaves of Grass* and the original draftings of the poems, set parallel on opposing pages, with descriptive bibliographical notes throughout. Here are the original poems that Walt Whitman conceived, "in perhaps their most dynamic and personal form" of all the *Leaves* editions, from the MSS. handed down (according to tradition) from Whitman's printers eventually to the fabulous collection of Clifton W. Barrett. For the first time, any Whitman scholar or reader can see completely the growth of the poet's ideas and expressions in the important five-year period just after the first edition of the *Leaves*, and can see at a glance the hitherto often unappreciated art that Whitman (like Emily Dickinson)

consciously applied to his apparently careless expression. The difference, for example, between the earlier "I dart forth Religion" (in "Premonition") and the later "I, too, following many, and followed by many, inaugurate a Religion" (in "Proto-Leaf," later "Starting from Paumanok") demonstrates a conscious emphasis on oracularity that may be more ideologically significant than poetically fortunate, but another example—the omission of I's from the early lines of "Leaves-Droppings" when it became "Enfans d'Adam"—is impressive in all respects. From this parallel text, compiled by a noted analytical bibliographer, will come revealing biography, criticism, and appreciation in the future. The high price seems low when one examines the superb compositorial and editorial job necessary to parallelism without confusion of types, wasteful gaps, and ugly bunching.

## Literary History and Criticism

THEORY OF PROSODY IN EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY ENGLAND, Paul Fussell, Jr. (Connecticut College Monograph No. 5, 150 pp.). Fussell's valuable monograph succeeds in being thorough without dullness, and restores vitality to a neglected area of criticism. He argues persuasively that there is not one English Prosody, but several (he suggests a tentative list of eight). With admirable lucidity and freedom from academic pretension, he traces a significant shift during the eighteenth century from conservative syllabism and stress-regularity to a new accentualism. His examples are copious and effective; the accuracy of his ear and his appositeness of quotation are rare gifts. Best of all, Mr. Fussell (of Rutgers University) does not shy away from the practical implications of

his findings for students of poetry written (or read and misread) in centuries beyond the scope of his study. He sharply attacks Karl Shapiro and others whose "feeble sense of history" has weakened their prosodic theorizing; he asks if some of the "difficulty" of contemporary verse may not arise from "artificial scansion" or other distortions due to prosodic ignorance and misconception. Although the study will appeal most to specialists in the eighteenth century, it may be easily and profitably read as an introduction and orientation in theory of English prosody.

BRUCE DEARING

SWARTHMORE COLLEGE

THE POLITICAL NOVEL, Joseph L. Blotner (Doubleday, 100 pp., .95, paper).

A teacher of literature (at Virginia) points out for his social studies colleagues some of the novels they can use to advantage in their work. His book may also encourage study of the political novel as a subtype in English courses. He looks at it as a political instrument, as a historical record, as a mirror of national character, as analysis of group political behavior, and as an analysis of individual political behavior. He knows that literature and political science are not synonymous.

**THE OPPOSING SELF: NINE ESSAYS IN CRITICISM**, Lionel Trilling (Viking, \$3.50). These essays, most of them introductions to books, and all of them published before, discuss such diverse topics as Keats's letters, *Little Dorrit*, *The Bostonians*, Orwell, Flaubert, and *Mansfield Park*. The common element is the modern conception of the self as trying to escape from its prison in its culture, "opposing" its culture. By the noted Columbia teacher.

**THE AGE OF SHAKESPEARE**, ed. Boris Ford (Penguin Guide to English Literature II, 500 pp., .95, paper). This compact, inexpensive, and well-printed symposium of nearly five hundred pages is the work of a dozen contemporary British scholars. Designed like the preceding volume of the series for the intelligent layman, it is also excellent introductory background reading for the student of Elizabethan and Jacobean drama. The various chapters run from the general to the particular with emphasis naturally upon Shakespeare. Social and literary conditions are discussed in Parts I and II respectively, which together total about a hundred pages. These are followed with discussions of Daniel, Raleigh, Marlowe, the popular reading of the time, the Elizabethan stage, and acting. Traversi, Maxwell, Knights, and again Traversi next consider Shakespeare's plays in the conventional four divisions that date from Dowden. Muir summarizes changing interpretations of Shakespeare. The last third of the book is given to some of Shakespeare's great contemporaries. Various authorities discuss Jonson, Chapman, Tourneur, and Middleton, and the decline of tragedy. The book concludes with an excellent thirty-page classified bibliography and a very

sketchy index. This is a good book for drama students. Its brief summaries of criticism and scholarship cover the most important critics from Rymer and Dryden to last year. Its chief fault is that it does not treat prose and non-dramatic poetry to the extent that its title or their relative importance during that age would justify.

GORDON R. SMITH  
PENNSYLVANIA STATE UNIVERSITY

**JOHN BUNYAN**, Roger Sharrock (London, Hutchinson's University Library, 163 pp., \$2.40, text \$1.80). Mr. Sharrock's book is designed as an introduction to Bunyan. The first chapter is devoted to the background, the second to the life, and each of the last five to one of the major works. Sharrock takes Bunyan's religion as well as his art seriously, examining it briefly and unobtrusively in the light of modern psychology; also he rightly emphasizes the archetypal quality of Bunyan's imagination. The book gains in ease and confidence as it progresses; the last chapter, which is on *Pilgrim's Progress, Part II*, is especially illuminating. By this time the pressure was off: Bunyan was at ease in his little community, no longer tortured by religious doubts, nor persecuted by the authorities; and the second journey along the King's Highway is as tranquil and chatty as a guided tour to the battlefields after the war is over.

EDWIN B. BENJAMIN  
BOWDOIN COLLEGE

**WORDSWORTH: A RE-INTERPRETATION**, F. W. Bateson (Longmans, 227 pp., \$3.50). "Wordsworth, far from being the central figure in the English Romantic Movement, is in truth the extreme instance of Romanticism. . . . His greatness lies . . . in the heroic and agonized efforts he made to break out of his own subjectivity." In his great middle period the poems blend his objective, factual, Augustan voice and his subjective, incorporeal, Romantic voice. Specialists *must* consider this study; all ardent admirers of Wordsworth will find it interesting.

**DICKENS AND HIS READERS**, George H. Ford (Princeton, 318 pp., \$6). As the

subtitle "Aspects of Novel-Criticism since 1836" suggests, this book attempts more than a record of the flow and ebb of Dickens' popularity; and its vigorousness, even exuberance, more than atones for the thousand confronting and affronting footnotes. Professor Ford (of the University of Cincinnati) believes that studies of literary reputation relying on reviews alone are inadequate; his own, which is based on diaries, autobiographies, letters, memoirs, etc., as well, is much more comprehensive and readable therefor. From one R. H. Horne to F. R. Leavis, his sources are endless and endlessly varied. This is indeed genial scholarship. It is even more, for from the indisputable statistics of Dickens' success spring the inviting disputables, the whys of that success: and in his "explanatory criticism" Ford re-creates Dickens' world with its shibboleths and anathemas, its dunderheads and saints. The great novelist was, we become aware, creature as well as creator. There was always a forest amongst those trees. But expansiveness carries penalties. For example, to demonstrate that Arnold was an indifferent Dickens reader is, to be sure, to correct the notion that Dickens' charm was overpowering; but to go on to an imputation of Arnold's humbuggery is to wander; and to conclude with a reference to an article on Arnold's essay on Tolstoy is virtually to become lost. Similarly, that Dickens' Jenny Wren contributed to Henry James's Rosy Muniment is a pertinent proposition, but that Daudet's Mlle. Delobelle did is not; and extended digressions such as into the extent of Gissing's influence on James threaten the form of Ford's structure while their discursiveness charms and informs. Accordingly, however, every student of modern literature and literary relationships will profit from this book, and to Dickensians it will be important.

EDWARD STONE

UNIVERSITY OF VIRGINIA

**COOPER'S THEORY OF FICTION**, Arvid Shulenberg (Kansas, 92 pp., \$3) At various times James Fenimore Cooper wrote a total of fifty-seven prefaces for his thirty-one novels. These have long been of interest for the variety of opinions on political and social subjects which they contain. They do not, however, present a theory

of fiction, nor does the present volume, by a professor at Kansas, make out a successful case for Cooper's theoretical approach to his craft.

GEORGE J. BECKER

SWARTHMORE COLLEGE

**THE TRAGIC SATIRE OF JOHN WEBSTER**, Travis Bogard (California, 138 pp., \$3.50). A study of Webster's "tragic vision" as expressed in his two major plays, *The White Devil* and *The Duchess of Malfi*. Webster's pessimistic view of mankind and the world is similar to that of many twentieth century poets. He gave voice to it by trying to blend tragedy and satire. Bogard (California) discusses his dramaturgy in detail.

**JOHN GAY: SOCIAL CRITIC**, Sven M. Armens (King's Crown, 262 pp., \$4). An extended critical analysis of Gay's works which shows him to be more genuinely serious than many have supposed about such questions as: Is justice equally available to the rich and the poor? Are the criteria of the artist of merit the bases of contemporary good taste? Do the wise and virtuous have any genuine influence in setting our moral standards? By a teacher at the S. U. of Iowa.

**ILLUSTRATED HISTORY OF ENGLISH LITERATURE**, Vol. 2, A. C. Ward (Longmans, 261 pp. \$5.50). The story from Ben Jonson to Samuel Johnson, readably told, with four full-color plates from paintings and fifty-six monochrome plates reproducing paintings or original illustrations of the works discussed.

**THOMAS WOLFE: THE WEATHER OF HIS YOUTH**, Louis D. Rubin, Jr. (Louisiana State, 183 pp., \$3.50). The latest book on Wolfe, by a teacher of American Civilization at Penn, builds itself around the not overwhelming point that Wolfe wrote autobiographical fiction. However, Rubin's point is fleshed with clear summaries of how this autobiography comes into fictional terms of time patterns, intimations of immortality, city vs. town, mother vs. father, and home vs. home. Agreeing with Faulkner that Wolfe's greatness lies in what he *tried* to do, Rubin is still not led



astray by the delusion that the novelist somehow epitomized America in his work. Wolfe's main achievement, according to this well-documented tome, was not the writing of novels (*Look Homeward, Angel* is probably his only good one), but the creation of a fictional character, who happened to be named Thomas Wolfe in real life. For those who can no longer take even a paragraph of Wolfe, who have come to see him much as Red Riding-Hood came to see her wolf—as a great animal with monstrous eyes and mouth feeding off and impersonating old ladies—this book will tell them more than they want to know. But for those whose arteries are not too hardened to respond to the *Bildungsroman*, and for those who feel that Wolfe, like Whitman, was unique, this is a rewarding study.

**THE CONTEMPORARY FRENCH NOVEL**, Henri Peyre (Oxford, 352 pp., \$5). The net impression produced by this comprehensive and informed survey by the noted Yale scholar is that the French novel has fallen on evil days. The names of Balzac, Stendhal, Zola, and Proust (not of Flaubert, significantly) are so often invoked as to dwarf the writers of the mid-twen-

tieth century. Mr. Peyre's basic charge is that the French novel has incurred a severe handicap of sterile psychological analysis and of stylistic narcissism. To a considerable extent the example of the American novel has helped to rescue French writers from these weaknesses, less by direct imitation than by demonstration of the vital and varied capacities of the novel as a medium. The author gives his warmest praise to Malraux and Sartre because of their insistent tone of metaphysical anguish, for "The originality of our age lies in a tragic conception of philosophy . . .," which they and the Americans share in great measure. Simone de Beauvoir he treats with respect; Camus he depreciates somewhat; and other well-known figures like Romain, Duhamel, Giono, and St. Exupéry he puts firmly in a lower rank than has been accorded them by enthusiasts. At the end of this volume there is a 30-page "Panorama of Present-day Novelists," chiefly important or conspicuous since 1945. It is significant that Mr. Peyre refrains from pointing to any of these as the hope of contemporary French fiction.

GEORGE J. BECKER

SWARTHMORE COLLEGE

### Literary Biography

**THE LIFE RECORDS OF JOHN MILTON**, Volume 3 (1651-1654), ed. J. Milton French (Rutgers, 470 pp., \$7.50). The third volume of French's monumental collection deals with Milton's life during the height of his political activity—from the time of the *Defensio pro Populo Anglicano* through the *Defensio Secunda*. Like the two previous volumes of the series, this includes every extant piece of paper relating to Milton during this period: letters between Heinsius and Vossius reporting Salmasius' rage against Milton and More's seduction of Salmasius' servant girl; the order that the *Defensio* be burned in Toulouse by the hangman; every available scrap of direct evidence about his blindness; even records of his mother-in-law's financial dealings. The great importance of these volumes to Milton scholars is matched by French's great energy and thoroughness in collecting and editing the material. A certain amount of

irrelevant material has been included—e.g., the signature "Milton" as a pseudonym on a letter from Sir George Carteret to Sir Edward Nicholas, entirely unrelated to the poet—but the value of a work like this lies in its completeness and accuracy, not in its succinctness. It is difficult to imagine a work more complete or more accurate than these three volumes.

RALPH W. CONDEE

PENNSYLVANIA STATE UNIVERSITY

**EMILY DICKINSON'S HOME: LETTERS OF EDWARD DICKINSON AND HIS FAMILY**, ed. Millicent Todd Bingham (Harper, 600 pp., \$6.50). With scarcely more new Emily Dickinson material than would fill a scholarly article, Mrs. Bingham has made a large and excellent book. She reprints the letters to Austin, and a few other notes, first printed in her mother's editions of the *Letters*, with

a more accurate text and with all decipherable deletions restored. Included also are three drafts of what can only be called love letters to some unnamed "Master," never published before, perhaps never sent. They are as intense, as queer, one almost writes embarrassing, as the letters to Judge Otis Lord that Mrs. Bingham has revealed elsewhere. Mrs. Bingham also publishes many notes and letters from Austin, "Vinnie," Edward Dickinson, and an early one from Mrs. Dickinson, most from the same period (1847-1854). Not the least appealing part of the book is her "documentation and comment," on the earlier history of the Dickinson family, on Edward Dickinson, on the life of women in rural New England in Emily Dickinson's time, and on other topics. This, Mrs. Bingham's fourth and last book on the Dickinsons, well accomplishes her purpose: "to make real the home where Emily Dickinson's life was spent."

STEPHEN E. WHICHER

SWARTHMORE COLLEGE

**BOOTH TARKINGTON: GENTLEMAN FROM INDIANA**, James Woodress (Lippincott, 350 pp., \$5). To list only a few of his accomplishments, Booth Tarkington won the Pulitzer prize and the Howells Medal of the American Academy of Arts and Letters, he sold over five million copies of his books, and he wrote or collaborated on a number of Broadway hits. Nevertheless, American literary histories note him only in passing, and the best bibliography does not allow him a separate entry. But this devoted and competent study, by Woodress of Butler, sets the record right by examin-

ing in detail both the life and the works of his subject. The biography, based on unlimited access to large files of Tarkington papers at Princeton and elsewhere, is definitive. The critical evaluation is superior because it is derived from a warm and understanding view of Tarkington's literary intentions. The result is, at least, a clear approach to Tarkington's very real contribution to an understanding of our own society.

ARTHUR O. LEWIS, JR.

PENNSYLVANIA STATE UNIVERSITY

**THE LIFE OF DAVID HUME**, Ernest C. Mossner (Texas, 683 pp., \$7.50). An admirable study of the life and thought of the author of the famed *Treatise of Human Nature*; scholarly, sound, and eminently readable; handsomely printed with twenty illustrations, two in color. Professor Mossner teaches at Texas.

**THE WINGED LIFE: A PORTRAIT OF ANTOINE DE SAINT-EXUPÉRY, POET AND AIRMAN**, Richard Rumbold and Lady Margaret Stewart (David McKay, 224 pp., \$3.50). A judicious sketch of the erratic life of the most famous writer about flying, by two of his British admirers. Saint-Exupéry, who disappeared on a Mediterranean flight in 1944 at the age of 44, turns out to have been, as his books indicate, an extreme romantic personalist, and, as his books do not indicate, an absent-minded pilot who should have been permanently grounded long before the last of his many crashes.

## Translations

**A TAGORE TESTAMENT**, trans. Indu Dutt (Philosophical Library, 117 pp., \$4.75). Autobiographical essays in prose and verse by the Hindu prophet who today is almost without honor except in his own country.

**SIX GREEK PLAYS IN MODERN TRANSLATION**, ed. Dudley Fitts (Dry-

den, 294 pp., \$1.95). "Experimental"—that is, twentieth-century—versions of the *Oresteia* by George Thomson, *Philoctetes* by Alston Chase, *Andromache* by Van L. Johnson, and *The Birds* by various hands, with the usual spirited introduction by Anderson's Fitts. Similar in format to his *Eleven Greek Plays in Modern Translation*.

## Composition and Communication

WORDS ARE IMPORTANT, H. C. Hardwick (C. S. Hammond, 52 pp., .35, paper). The Fifth (and last) Book in a series of vocabulary exercises, this one designed for college freshmen. The lessons consist of writing and completing brief definitions of words, the reviews of multiple-choice, completion, and substitution exercises, plus Greek and Latin derivatives (Yes, the author is apparently Canadian).

FORM AND STYLE IN THESIS WRITING, William G. Campbell (Houghton Mifflin, 114 pp., \$1.75, paper). Second edition of *A Form Book for Thesis Writing* developed at USC, with changes from 1939.

EFFECTIVE READING AND LEARNING, Phillip B. Shaw (Cornell, 447 pp., n.p.l.). Part I tells both good and bad students how to read, and Part II, how to take college courses and get something out of them. By the Supervisor of the Reading and Study Program at Brooklyn.

CONTRASTS: IDEA AND TECHNIQUE, Robert E. Knoll (Harcourt, Brace, 575 pp., \$3.75). An anthology of stories, poems, and essays for students of writing. For every item there is one presenting the opposite point of view or using a contrasting technique, e.g., Robert Hutchins vs. Harold Taylor, Burke vs. Faine, Lloyd vs. Barzun; five translations of a passage from the *Iliad*, Shakespeare, Donne, and Thomas on death, Mary McCarthy's now famous "story" of anti-Semitism and how it was misread. With questions, biographical notes, and (for some reason, but why not?) a list of paper-bound books. Professor Knoll is at Nebraska.

REPORT WRITING, John Ball and Cecil B. Williams (Ronald, 407 pp., \$4.75). Ball of Miami and Williams of Oklahoma A. and M. present a full treatment of the way technical reports are and should be written in business, industry, and the professions. With sixty-nine illustrations.

MODERN RHETORIC AND USAGE FOR COLLEGE COMPOSITION AND COMMUNICATION, T. J. Kallsen (Holt, 506 pp., \$3.90). The author (West Virginia) is disarmingly frank: "I suppose there is no right way, and I lay no claim to righteous exclusiveness. But after eight years of experimentation in college classrooms with the materials of this book, I think its approach . . . represents one right way. . . ." Again, "So this is, frankly, a 'sail-trimmer' of a book," as far as usage and theory go. As one might guess, Kallsen believes in integrated composition and communication, and in being clear and accurate and interesting. 150 of the pages constitute a handbook.

TWENTY LESSONS IN READING AND WRITING PROSE, Donald Davidson (Scribner's, 285 pp., \$3). Professor (Vanderbilt) and writer, Davidson has prepared lessons—"not 'assignments'"—that attempt to meet the fact that a composition teacher cannot treat each point in isolation but must usually do everything at once. Selections and exercises.

CLEAR AND EFFECTIVE WRITING, Cathleen Wheat (Appleton-Century-Crofts, 290 pp., \$2.25, paper). Text and workbook by a teacher at UCLA.

THOUGHT AND STATEMENT, William G. Leary and James S. Smith (Harcourt, Brace, 538 pp., \$3.75). Two teachers at Louisiana State revise their *Think Before You Write* (1951) into a new book of selections and questions, "arranged inductively" instead of with a key essay at the beginning of each section.

WRITING A PAPER: FROM IDEA TO FINISHED COPY, Glenn Leggett and Elinor Yaggy (Ronald, 192 pp., \$2.50, paper). Work-book, with emphasis on planning and revising a paper, by the Director of Freshman English at Washington and a colleague. An amazing variety of exercises.

## Reprints

KENTUCKY STORY: A COLLECTION OF SHORT STORIES, ed. Hollis Summers (Kentucky, 247 pp., \$3). From James Lane Allen to A. B. Guthrie, Jr., but mostly by living Kentuckians, edited by a writer and teacher of writing at the University.

MISS RAVENAL'S CONVERSION FROM SECESSION TO LOYALTY, John W. De Forest, ed. Gordon Haight (Rinehart, 485 pp., \$1.45, paper). De Forest's classic of early American realism has deserved popular reprinting since the Harper edition by Haight of Yale went out of print ten years ago. The new reader should be delighted by the opening chapters—some of the funniest in American fiction—and instructed by the later and sadder view of American character in the Civil War.

THE IDEA OF PROGRESS: AN INQUIRY INTO ITS ORIGIN AND GROWTH, J. B. Bury (Dover, 357 pp., \$3.95, \$1.85 paper). Bury's inquiry of a quarter of a century ago is still one of the most fascinating *opera* of intellectual history; hail to Dover for reprinting it! With Beard's long introduction.

A BROWNING HANDBOOK, William C. De Vane (Appleton-Century-Crofts, 2nd ed., 594 pp., \$6). Revision of this standard work, too long out of print, with recent scholarship blended (see, e.g., "My Last Duchess"), and the whole presented in larger type.

OF MICE AND MEN, John Steinbeck (Bantam, 118 pp., .35, paper). Still Steinbeck's best short novel.

THE ART OF TEACHING, Gilbert Highet (Vintage Books, 259 pp., .95, paper). Every teacher and prospective teacher should read this 1950 classic by the Columbia classical scholar and teacher.

THE CREATIVE PROCESS: A SYMPOSIUM, ed. Brewster Ghiselin (New American Library, 251 pp., .50, paper). A Mentor reprint of the 1952 collection of essays by thirty-eight creative men and women from Einstein to Tate, on how they have done it, edited by a poet, critic, and teacher from the University of Utah. Invaluable for teachers of literature who do or do not write themselves.

ABINGER HARVEST, E. M. Forster (Noonday, 334 pp., \$1.25, paper). A Meridian reprint of a popular writer's 1936 gathering of eighty of his essays on books, people, and places. For all those who like Forster, England, literature, feeling, skepticism, and humor.

GROWTH AND STRUCTURE OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE, Otto Jespersen (Doubleday Anchor Books, ninth edition, 274 pp., .95, paper). The 1905 classic by the great Danish philologist.

SAYONARA, James A. Michener (Bantam, 118 pp., .35, paper). The novel of G. I.—Japanese relationships.

WILLIAM BLAKE: A MAN WITHOUT A MASK, J. Bronowski (Penguin, 218 pp., .65, paper). Reprint of the 1944 work by an amazing Polish-British scientist. With sixteen plates.

## Corrections

Last month's notice of Francis Connolly's *The Types of Literature* (Harcourt, Brace, 810 pp., \$5.75) included the statement, "the publisher says that the book is 'primarily for Catholic colleges' . . ." This description actually applied to Professor Connolly's *Literature: the Channel of Culture*, now out of print; the new book is non-sectarian. *Modern American and British Poetry*, issued by the same publisher, is available in a text edition at \$3.75 as well as in the trade edition noted at \$5. *America's Literature*, ed. James D. Hart and Clarence Gohdes (Dryden, 958 pp., \$6.50) does indeed have footnotes, which were said to be missing.

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